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Arthur C. Holden and Associates, Architects

THE MOTTO ON THE RUG PERFECTLY EXPRESSES THE ATMOSPHERE OF THIS HALL

[PLATE 1]

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P8

THE PERSONALITY OF A HOUSE

The Blue Book of
Home Design and Decoration

By EMILY POST
(*Mrs. Price Post*)
AUTHOR OF "ETIQUETTE: THE BLUE BOOK OF SOCIAL USAGE," ETC.

ILLUSTRATED

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IN MEMORY OF
THE ARCHITECTS
OF MY FAMILY

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E. P.

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The Personality of a House

I

WHAT IS MEANT BY PERSONALITY

HUNDREDS of textbooks have been written, covering every period of domestic architecture, interior ornamentation and furnishing, from oldest Egyptian antiquities to latest modern obliquities. But the *personality* of a house, the quality that appeals not merely to our critical faculties but to our personal emotions, has been left out altogether—overlooked perhaps, or possibly taken for granted, as though a collection of valuable possessions must of themselves confer charm.

And yet charm is precisely what the majority of houses lack. We pass all sorts of adequately designed and neatly cared-for houses, much as we pass all sorts of neatly presentable and might-be-agreeable people on the street, without noticing them at all. Occasional houses attract attention pleasantly or unpleasantly, but rarely do we see a house of such appealing personality that we walk past it very, very slowly, trying to see as much of it as we can, and ardently wishing that we might see it all around, and inside, too.

The appealing personality of a house may be quite apart from its size or its value. It may belong to a structure of importance set in an equally important architectural entourage, or it may belong to a house in a row, or to a little cottage in a tiny patch of dooryard planting. Moreover, the test of its personality is not determined—yes or no—by the question of architectural correctness, but by the question of whether it has the qualities that enchant.

What are the qualities that enchant? This question is twin sister to the age-old "What is charm?" Charm has

thousands of times been described as including beauty, taste, sympathy, appealing manner, and so on and so forth. The difficulty of definition begins in attempting to divide further the components of beauty, taste, sympathy and appealing manner so as to be satisfactory to you and to me and to everyone else. Happily, enchanting qualifications of a house are less difficult to determine, because they at least must follow certain definite and immutable laws of form, proportion and—most important of all—suitability to situation and to purpose.

SITUATION AND PURPOSE

The first requirement of architectural beauty is suitability to situation. A house should always seem to belong where it stands. If it looks forced upon an unwilling landscape, or if it is in any way antagonistic or uncomfortable because conspicuous or out of scale, then it fails in this first requirement.

A high-porticoed white-painted Colonial house on a windswept crag jutting out into the ocean is as unsuitable as an organdie dress worn out in a snowstorm. A low-flung building of massive boulders in a warm and tranquil valley is like a coonskin coat in July.

The house of boulders should stand on a ledge or summit of rock that supports its weight and absorbs its material. The Colonial house would be sympathetically placed on an elm-bordered street, or on its own wide lawn against the green of a wooded background.

The second requirement is suitability to purpose. Unless an intentional camouflage of an ugly utility, every structure, whether a monumental edifice or smallest outbuilding, should suggest the purpose for which it is intended. A prison or a bank should suggest impregnable strength; a dwelling should be suggestive of home. Moreover, the house which is to be your home—in short, your background—should unmistakably suggest *you*.

THE HOUSE THAT EXPRESSES YOU

Its personality should express your personality, just as every gesture you make—or fail to make—expresses your gay animation or your restraint, your old-fashioned conventions, your perplexing mystery, or your emancipated modernism—whichever characteristics are typically yours.

The house that does not express the individuality of its owner is like a dress shown on a wax figure. It may be a beautiful dress—may be a beautiful house—but neither is animated by a living personality.

In illustration of type suitable to each individuality, the preciousness of a coldly discriminating connoisseur would be utterly unsympathetic to the unconventional and exaggeration-loving modern to whom riotous confusion of noise and color is merely cheerful. And yet, just as certain women of outstanding fascination charm everyone with whom they come in contact, so also do certain houses exert a vivid appeal —which may be personal, or may not.

In other words, you can intellectually admire a house, exactly as you admire an exhibition of furniture or tapestries assembled in a museum, without in the least longing to live in like surroundings.

Strictly Period houses are wonderfully interesting to look at; but to live in, they are too suggestive of perpetual fancy dress to suit most of us. Furthermore, if it is one's ambition to have a flawless fifteenth-century house, then one must be resigned to the use of no convenience invented since 1500—no steam heat, no plumbing, no springs in furniture, no electric light, no modern range, china, glass, table implements, or even modern dress!—in other words, no evidence of contact with the modern world. Which raises the question of how far anachronism may be allowed to go. That one could find true allegiance to purity is rather doubtful. Remembering the wife in the *Arabian Nights* who never ate more than one grain of rice in the presence of her husband—but was served bountifully between meals—one fears that old chests

would be full of steam pipes, that sliding panels would disclose plenty of bathrooms, and that bouncing springs and downy rest mattresses would wait temptingly beneath fifteenth-century bed covers; and, moreover, that kitchens and pantries and dining-room as well as table-manners would in no detail be faithful to the uncouth barbarism of four hundred years ago.

To determine the type and size and detail of the house that expresses your personality it is necessary to ask a few personal questions.

First of all, how much are you affected by your surroundings? Are you so sensitive to beauty that ugliness is a physical hurt? Will you take any amount of trouble to "fix" whatever rooms you are to live in, no matter how transiently? Must you personally choose every object? Or are you content to believe, on being assured by a professing expert, that what you would never have chosen for yourself is appropriately beautiful? Or are you one of those persons who do not even bother to notice inanimate detail and who are in nowise impressed by it?

WHAT ARE YOUR TASTES?

What is your temperament? Are you conventional, or the reverse? Is your taste conservative, or has the novelty of the modern irresistible appeal? Does noise set your nerves on edge, or are you only happy with the radio tuned in on jazz? Does life express itself to you in the perpetual presence of a crowd of people? Do you want company for every meal? Is Home otherwise a place to dress in and go out from and to return to when there is no other where to go? Or do you like to stay at home with your family alone, and "never ask a cat to the house"?

What is your mode of life? How do you live? Simply, or in much style? "Simply" may mean plainly or it may mean utmost perfection possible on a small scale. "Much style" may mean all put on for show and not necessarily well

done, or it may mean the utmost perfection attainable. The term "utmost perfection" means sufficient implements for the varied requirements of complete equipment, and servants sufficient in number and expertness for the size of the house.

The requirements for utmost perfection are precisely the same whether a house have four rooms or a hundred. An establishment imperfect in quality is likewise the same whether unexactingly simple or like a gigantic and overdressed infant, bellowing its shortcomings to everyone but its owner.

It is impossible to overemphasize one qualifying fact: The house of unpretending simplicity attracts the criticism of no one—neither in its correctness of style nor in its manner of service or appointment. But the would-be owner of the house of pretentious style should take serious notice that the first rule of good taste demands not only that the house he lives in should be suitable to his requirements, but that all houses of outstanding importance demand conformity on their owners' part to them.

Sweaters and day clothes at an eight or nine o'clock dinner at a table set with damask and great display of silver, in a classically Georgian or ornately French dining-room, are as completely out of the picture as formal evening clothes would be at a six o'clock supper on a farm or in a ranch house.

MATCHING YOUR BACKGROUND

Moreover, the exactions of suitability of upkeep would be equally opposed. But with a difference in this: That in the simplest type of house one may live as beautifully as one pleases—meaning that one may have the most charming table, in the most charming room; also the most delicious food most perfectly served—but in a palace one must have all these requirements and all those prescribed for formality as well.

Therefore, unless you are prepared to conform to the requirements that formality exacts, don't choose that type

of house. If you like to dine in your sports clothes, or pass dishes around from hand to hand, do what you please in your own home by all means, but at least choose your dining-room and your table-setting accordingly.

At the other extreme, a footman behind each chair in a primitive little cottage is not smart, but is in shockingly bad form.

In other words, it is entirely a question of properly matching your background. If you choose to live in a simple house you can have every equipment of luxury, but you must not offend against the spirit of apparent simplicity. On the other hand, if you choose to live in a palace, not only must all your appointments be of suitable dignity and quality, but so also must *you*.

Strict observance of these requirements is limited to the two extremes. The great majority who live in average houses can do pretty much as they please, unless too closely approaching the limitations of the one extreme or the other.

In the average house you can be formal on occasions and informal on others. If you have not the equipment for formal service exacted of a great house, what of it? And who cares? The only point to care about is that what you do is done well according to the standards which are suitable to the way you choose to live.

THE FOUR ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS OF EVERY HOUSE

Every house must respond to four requirements: First, its outer road or street appearance—that which is plainly on view to the public passing by. Second, its entrance hall and drawing-room of formal hospitality. Third, its intimate rooms satisfying to the needs of those who live in them. Fourth, its practical response to modern requirements of comfort.

Charming street appearance most often belongs to low, broad houses. An inordinately high-peaked roof is probably the original source of the slang term "high hat," which is

reason enough for the preference of most of us for roofs of friendly lowness.

Houses that are high in proportion to width, especially if they have overnarrow, deeply set windows and solid front doors, are seldom as invitingly hospitable as those which are more nearly block square or, better still, irregularly rambling. But far more important than height or width or pleasing variety of outline are windows sufficient in number and size to suggest light, sunny rooms within.

Architects of predominatingly masculine taste are noted for their love of blank wall spaces, and usually entertain the opinion that whole walls of windows look like factories without and leave no space for furniture within. But, on the other hand, a house with tiny windows sparsely inserted looks to most women like nothing so much as a suit of armor with visor down. Tempting to live within? Not exactly!

WINDOWS ARE THE SMILES OF A HOUSE

If the windows are generous in outline, they give the same impression as the welcoming smiles of a friend. Of course, if they are out of proportion, so that they seem to yawn or grimace or make a fish-mouth, they are not pleasing at all.

The front door is always of utmost importance to the charm of a house. A front door of lovely design and perfect scale is like a beautiful hand held out in welcome. A hideously untidy door is like a dirty hand that is repellent to touch.

However, if the house is set back from the street its first approach is from its gate. Invariably inviting is a flower-bordered walk of brick or pebbles or flagstones outlined in grass. Unappealing is the concrete walk raised above the surrounding grass; bare-edged and hard as the runway between trains at a railroad terminal. And yet the ugly hardness of such a walk might easily be overcome by sinking it to the level of the grass, with box or privet or other bordering hedge.

On the exterior, color plays a minor part as compared with its importance in the interior. But light-colored houses, sand or cream or oyster or white or the pinkish tones of brick, are to most people more appealing—perhaps because more cheerful—than houses of dark material.

The serviceable economy of a dark-stone or shingle or half-timbered house appeals strongly to the thrifty, and a house can be dark-colored and at the same time cheerfully beautiful—especially if it be English in type—but not otherwise so often nor so easily as can a light one.

By "light" is not meant golden oak combined with yellow baked brick—a color scheme especially associated with a certain type of so-called mansion of heavy fatness sitting stodgily on a plot of manicured grass neatly polka-dotted with beds patterned in magentas and scarlet. A color scheme as suitable as any, since this particular shade of oak and brick is notably defiant of garden beautification.

THE ROOM OF CHARM

Usually the first thing the average person notices on entering a room is color, and next invitingness of arrangement; next comfort, and details last. And to everyone capable of esthetic appreciation, certain beautifications inevitably appeal.

Besides the beauty of color and sunlight and, if possible, flowers, the ideal living-room should have an open fire in winter, and windows opening on a garden in summer. And there should be at least one long and deeply comfortable sofa drawn near to the fire for warmth when necessary, and near enough to a window for light; and there should be a number of properly fitting easy chairs—not those which assume the human frame to be a block of concrete three feet square! And there should be convenient tables at one's elbow, with bells, books, magazines, cigarettes, lighters, ash-trays or whatever the owners or friends of the house are likely to use. There must also be perfect arrangement of light

FRONT DOOR OF AUTHOR'S MASSACHUSETTS HOUSE

[PLATE 2]

James W. O Connor, Architect

A ROOM OF SUPREME PERSONALITY AND CHARM

[PLATE 3]

at night to read by, whether lying on the sofa or sitting in any of the chairs. Light that is cut off a foot below one's book or sewing, or that does not brightly illumine the field of a card table, is *not* good light. Lights of greatest comfort are standing ones with arms that reach over either chair or table. Table lamps that are intended for use, as well as for decoration, should have white or cream-lined shades that tip at will.

COMFORT—WHICH IS CHARM—AT REASONABLE COST

Every house of comfort must, of course, respond to practical requirements. It must, for instance, be snugly warm in cold weather and well ventilated and cool in summer. It must have windows that create a proper draft when open and that won't rattle when closed. It must have shutters that won't bang, roofs that won't leak, and it must have chimneys that draw. There must be a convenient pantry and a pleasant kitchen with all appurtenances thereto.

And in every house, whether luxurious or simple, each room should have an abundance of light and air.

I have a personal obsession against little windows even in bathrooms. No architect has yet convinced me that the advertised location of the plumbing looks any better on the outside of a house than does a slit of a window from within! True luxury in the upstairs part of a house does not depend upon huge bedrooms and large bathrooms but upon huge closet space for the bedrooms and plenty of no matter how little bathrooms—with big windows!

And in contrast to the house of newly built comfort and beauty is the house of unnecessary ugliness. Dinginess, darkness, excess of bad ornamentation, hideosity of inconvenience, are faults that unresourceful people of moderate means accept with resignation in the belief that only a bottomless purse would be able to cope with them.

How many times does one hear a discouraged voice say, "Ugly old house, ugly old furniture—nothing can be done about it. We can't possibly afford to buy all new!"

Sometimes the house is so completely bad there is nothing that can be done even with unreasonable outlay. But far more often than not, a small expenditure will help a lot or quite possibly can beautify completely. This does not mean that an effect of charm and beauty can be made with hideous furniture against hideous walls, but that the beauty-loving woman will contrive somehow to achieve an effect of inviting personality in her surroundings, even though she accomplish it with saw and chisel, a few cans of paint and some cotton print.

And fortunately the house of inviting personality is not necessarily the result of expenditure, nor always dependent upon intrinsic value of items. Certain types of perfection are far beyond the purse of most of us, it is true. But other types are most often a matter of personal knowledge and taste.

The unknowing person will rent a house that is hopelessly bad but in better apparent repair than another of lower rent that could with the difference saved in rent be put in equal repair and made, moreover, into a house of beauty.

Side by side, two chairs or carpets or tables or rolls of wall-paper are offered to two women. The one who has taste chooses this item and the one who is ignorant chooses the other. Quite often the good article is of less cost than the bad. And yet on every news-stand are magazines filled with much beauty—also with some ugliness, it is true. And in every library or museum are books or models showing details of classic forms as well as those of succeeding styles or Periods—knowledge to be had for the asking. In fact, so replete, diverse and scholarly are these books, that the attempt to write one such as this would be presuming were it to pretend to be a work of history, or a guide to the prospective owner of a palace who can say to the best architect, landscape gardener, and art connoisseur, "Build me a beautiful garden, put in it a house of supreme perfection, embellish it and fill it with objects of virtu and value, knowingly chosen and placed."

The object of this book of mine is merely to share the

practical every-day experience of a chronic house-builder who for more years than most of us care to count (beginning at the age of ten) has been unceasingly occupied with the embellishment of houses—whether outside, inside, temporarily or permanently.

Moreover, this continuous practise in building, rebuilding, furnishing or furbishing, has all been of the ordinary sort that comes within the province of the owner or tenant of the American house of average size. My intention, therefore, is to write frankly and from an essentially unprofessional point of view of a subject to which lifelong associations have brought me closest. And it is especially my intention not merely to emphasize the beauty which is achievable with inordinate expenditure (the one and only flaw in the best of the books and magazines), but to point out as many as possible of the underlying principles by which home-loving people of refinement and taste are able to create an atmosphere of homelike charm with whatever they may have, and wherever they may be.

II

ARCHITECTURE AT A GLANCE

THE average person is apt to think of architecture as a purely technical subject—as specialized as the manufacture of steel or the practise of surgery. In its ecclesiastical and memorial aspects this is true, but in its domestic aspect it is of vital and personal concern to every house owner, and every hoping-to-be house owner, in the world; in fact, architecture might be considered as a fourth addition to the "three R's": reading, 'riting, 'rithmetic—and 'rchitecture! At all events it is not unreasonable to recommend that its elemental principles be included in the curriculum of every school for girls, even if other subjects have to be discarded to make room for it.

Latin and algebra are undoubtedly good training for the mind, but they are both of about as much practical use to most of us as a knowledge of hydraulic mining. A good stiff course in architecture could be quite as useful, calisthenically, to the mind as mathematics or Cæsar! And yet, where millions of schoolgirls are obliged to study Latin and algebra, not one in a thousand of them has the least knowledge of the traditions of classic structure and form; not one in a hundred knows the first thing about the beautification of a house in accordance with the standards of good taste. But nearly every girl hopes some day to have a home of her own. She hopes to live in surroundings that are beautiful.

She might as well hope to be a concert pianist without ever having touched a piano, as to hope to achieve a beautiful house by means of instinct alone—unless "instinct" has been trained through lifelong precept and association. One is inclined to think of taste as a natural gift, and in a measure this is true, much as it is true of music. But in addition to

natural aptitude for either of these gifts, there must be persistent study and practise to acquire any satisfactory knowledge of either.

As it is impossible to say anything about the beauty of houses without mentioning the Classic Orders from which the standards of beauty have been derived; or to appraise the various styles that we choose for our own homes of to-day without reference to the Periods which have served to produce them, the remainder of this chapter will be devoted to the briefest possible outline of the ancestry of the modern American house.

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY

Although architectural history begins properly with the Pyramids of Egypt, those gigantic triangles are of no concern to us. The sole example of Egyptian architecture in which we have personal interest is the rock-cut temple at Beni-Hassan, which is quite obviously a near relative, if not the parent, of the Doric Order of Greece; otherwise there is no trace of relationship between Egypt and ourselves. Neither are our houses descended from Assyria, unless it was from the Assyrians that we learned to make bricks—just as glassmaking came from the Phenicians. And even though the excavations conducted since 1876 in Crete have revealed—especially in the great palace at Knossos—the possibility that the Golden Age of Greece may have owed much of its culture to an earlier Mycenæan civilization, it is with the civilization of the Greeks that we are personally concerned.

THE CLASSIC ORDERS OF GREECE

It is impossible to overemphasize the importance of Greek architecture, which had its beginning in 650 B.C., when the first Doric temple was built at Corinth, and which attained its highest perfection in the Age of Pericles and ended with the death of Alexander, 323 B.C.

The architectural ideals expressed by the ancient Greeks are those of all the European nations who have come after them. The measurements of the Greek temples remain the standard of perfection; their smallest details are constantly made use of in every classic type of memorial or civic building—and likewise in all formal Georgian or simple Colonial houses of to-day. Doorways, porticos, embellishments of interiors, depend for their beauty upon the reproduction of classic motives and moldings, and above all upon the classic rules of proportion to which perfection is necessarily due.

Fig. 1
TYPICAL GREEK TEMPLE

The supreme beauty of Greek architecture was expressed in the temples of Athens; each temple was built in commemoration of victory, and dedicated to the glory of an especial god or goddess. In other words, they were intentionally built as offerings of beauty that should be manifest to all beholders. Embellishments of columns, and sculptures, were applied to the outside, and to the rear and front equally.

In general outline the temples were much alike (see Fig. 1): a fairly low and fairly small rectangular building set upon a platform, leaving a margin or porch with steps going up to it on all four sides; a colonnade at the outside edge of the platform, and a roof over all with gable ends at the front and back, leaving the sides straight and plain.

Very small temples had a porch at the front and back only, with a single row of columns along the edge of the

Fig. 2
DORIC

Fig. 3
IONIC

Fig. 4
CORINTHIAN

steps. The great temples had a double row of columns at the front and back, and a single row at the sides. The different styles are determined by the design of the columns and the embellishment of the gable ends.

The Greek styles were limited to three—each in turn limited to the use of its own especially prescribed details of column and gable ornamentation. The details and properties of each comprise the design of each Order. The three Greek Orders are the Doric, the Ionic, and the Corinthian.

THE DORIC ORDER

The Doric was the earliest, the least ornate, and is the supreme expression of nobility, strength, and simplicity. To the Doric Order belongs the Parthenon, the most perfect example of classic architecture the world has ever known. The Doric column (see Fig. 2) is composed of a shaft that is without a base, but is embellished with twenty perpendicular "flutes" one-sixth of a diameter wide—grooves set close together, with sharp edges between. The column is eight diameters in height. Close to the top of the shaft are three small lines called fillets that look as though three strings had been wound around and tied until they cut in.

The tapering profile of the shaft curves slightly outward: this curve is called the entasis. The entasis is a notable detail of classic measurement—the design of a curve for the sole purpose of creating an illusion of straightness. The measurements of the Parthenon, seemingly a series of level planes and straight-sided right or acute angles, actually reveal a number of expertly computed curves. In a column that is skilfully designed, the existence of the entasis should not be perceptible to the eye, since it was created for the sole purpose of making the column appear straight. Were it actually a cylinder, it would look pinched in at the waist and broader at the top than at the bottom. The entasis of the Parthenon is three quarters of an inch on a shaft thirty-one feet high.

The reason why modern columns that bulge in the middle are bad is because they thwart the very purpose for which the entasis was created. In the same way, the entire superstructure which is supported by the columns appears to be a series of perfect horizontals, but it actually arches slightly. Were these horizontals truly level, they would appear to sag. But if you can perceive an upward curve, the design is at fault. (Curved horizontals are used only in very large buildings—rarely, if ever, in houses.)

The top embellishment of a column is called the capital. The Doric capital consists of a plain round cushion (echinus) —like a much flattened bead that is cut off above its widest part in order to hold securely a square flat block (abacus) on which the superstructure rests. The superstructure that is supported by columns is called the entablature.

The classic entablature consists of three members: A heavy beam—called the architrave—rests directly on the abacus of each column. Above the architrave comes the frieze, and above the frieze the cornice.

The Doric entablature (Fig. 5) had a perfectly plain architrave (beam); the frieze was ornamented with regularly spaced square blocks, each grooved with three vertical channels, called triglyphs. The spaces between the triglyphs, sometimes left plain, sometimes sculptured, were called

metopes. The cornice was very simple, consisting merely of horizontal facings of the eaves, the underside embellished with rectangular blocks, ornamented with evenly spaced projecting pegs, or pendant drops, or rounded nail heads. At the gable ends, the lower half of the cornice remained as a finish for the frieze; the upper half followed the angle of the roof, meeting at the peak and leaving a flattened triangular space—really the gable end—which is called a pediment. (This feature is the prototype of Colonial door and window embellishment.) The pediment of the Parthenon was gloriously ornamented with sculptures depicting the gods, goddesses and heroes of Greek mythology.

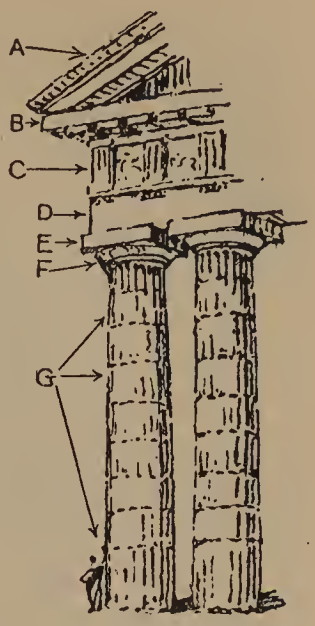


Fig. 5

THE DORIC ORDER

Entablature: A — Pediment; B — Cornice; C — Frieze; D—Architrave. *Capital:* E — Abacus; F—Echinus. G—Shaft.

THE IONIC ORDER

In the second Greek Order, called the Ionic (Fig. 3) the columns were more slender than those of the Doric. The shaft started from a base, and the capital—the outstanding feature—was in the spiraled form of a ram's horns (called volutes). The architrave was plain, but in three horizontal bands—like three shutter slats, each overlapping the one under it. The frieze was either plain or sculptured in a continuous band—not divided into squares as in the Doric Order. The cornice was elaborated with moldings consisting of rows of small square projecting blocks called dentils. The pediment was plain. An elaboration of the Ionic column was the caryatid or female figure. The spirals of the capital have more turns and there is also an ornamented necking. The most notable example of this beautiful variation of the Ionic

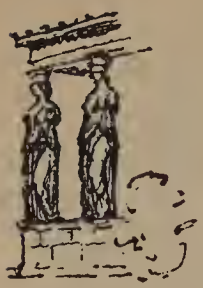


Fig. 6
GREEK
CARYATIDS

form is that of the porch of the Erechtheum, a temple on the Acropolis at Athens (Fig. 6).

THE CORINTHIAN ORDER

The third Greek Order, which belongs more typically to Rome than to Greece, is the Corinthian (Fig. 4). The capital of the Corinthian column is very ornate, and consists of acanthus leaves arranged like encircling ostrich plumes with backs to the column and tips curling upward and outward. At each corner above the acanthus foliation are four diagonally placed double-faced Ionic volutes, supporting a four-cornered abacus like four concave quarter-circlets brought together at the corners. The architrave and frieze are plain; but the cornice—in sympathy with the highly ornamented capital—is greatly enlarged and elaborated.

THE FIVE CLASSIC ORDERS OF ROME

In addition to the three Orders of Greece, classic architecture includes the five Orders of Rome. These eight Orders taken together comprise what are known as the Classic Orders.

In the beginning, the Romans were rather like the owners of an unplowed field who hear everyone continually praising the perfect garden of a neighbor. Looking over the fence and perceiving the beauty of Athens, they determined to turn their field into a garden that should be still more beautiful—at least, in effect. Beauty for mere beauty's sake concerned them very little. What they really wanted was to attract the attention of the world from Athens to Rome. So the Romans simply appropriated the Orders of Greece and adapted them to their own use—without really creating anything new. Even the two so-called supplementary Roman orders, which they added to the Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian,

were merely rearrangements of the beautiful Greek originals.

They added a base to the Doric shaft, omitted the flutes, and called it Tuscan (see Fig. 7). The Roman Doric (Fig. 8) was a slenderized Greek Doric with a base. The Roman Ionic (Fig. 9) was composed of the four-sided diagonal volutes of the Greek Corinthian capital. The Greek Ionic scrolls or volutes faced directly front and back and curled round like a slender-waisted bolster at the sides. The Romans preferred the four diagonal volutes that projected from the four cor-

Fig. 7
TUSCAN
COLUMN

Fig. 8
ROMAN
DORIC

Fig. 9
ROMAN
IONIC

Fig. 10
ROMAN
CORINTHIAN

Fig. 11
ROMAN
COMPOSITE

ners, so that the scrolls of the ram's horns curved from the sides as well as from the front and back views.

But the especial interest of the Romans was the Corinthian order, which—as their conquests brought them wealth and their love of magnificence increased—they greatly elaborated (Fig. 10). The increased height and width of the cornice was supported at intervals with ornamented S-shaped brackets called consoles.

Their fifth and not very admirable Order, known as the Composite, was produced by combining the Corinthian acanthus leaves with an enlargement of the Ionic volutes above them (Fig. 11).

OUR INDEBTEDNESS TO ROME

But if the Romans contributed little to the Orders, they contributed other details, to which we of to-day are far more indebted—from a practical standpoint—than to those of the Greeks. The Greeks showed us to what supreme height the beauty of architecture can be carried: without the Greek examples we should be without the standard by which to measure perfection. But the Romans gave us all our modern practical methods of building. The Greeks, in other words, were Olympians; the Romans were merely humans—like ourselves. Moreover, Rome gave us many details of greatest modern beauty, such as the perfected arch, the vaulted ceiling, and the arcade. We also owe to Rome the use of concrete, and the present-day method of veneering the face of a building with thin slabs of marble or stone, giving the appearance of a structure of solid blocks. We also owe to Rome many other ingenious methods of getting effects as quickly and as cheaply as possible. It is supposed that we owe the invention of bathtubs to the Romans; perhaps we owe to them our mania for building bathtubs in quantity, but it was the Chaldeans who built them first.

WHAT ONE PEOPLE REFUSED, ANOTHER ACCEPTED

The acceptances and rejections of various forms and methods by each succeeding Period are seemingly haphazard. For instance, the Egyptians, who—so far as is known—created the Doric column and lintel, discarded it completely. The Greeks took it, perfected it, exalted it, and through them it became the ancestor of Classic architecture. The Egyptian column never left North Africa. The Greeks in turn disdained the arch and cared little for the overelaborate Corinthian Order. The Romans elaborated the Corinthian Order to its utmost, and developed that lovely feature of modern embellishment, the pilaster—a square flat column set against the face of a wall for decorative purpose only.

Fundamentally, the inspirations of the Greeks and the Romans were diametrically opposed. The Romans loved lavish display; they cared for effect more than for perfection. They discovered concrete, and with it put up buildings with Aladdinlike rapidity. They carried through gigantic programs for the embellishment of Rome on a scale impossible

Fig. 12
ROMAN ARCH TRIUMPHAL

to the Greeks, who continued to build block-on-block, with marble.

OURSELVES OF LONG AGO

The Romans were absolutely the prototype of the Americans of to-day. They were energetic, ambitious, practical, inventive. They built baths everywhere. The arch had been rejected by the Greeks, because the Greek ideal was repose, and "the arch never sleeps." Rome glorified the arch. Rome did not want to sleep! In fact, it invented the modern slogan, "We never sleep!" Rome had no time for idle dreaming, nor for wasting thought on old-fashioned ideals, which were hampering to enterprise; the Greeks sought beauty above everything—and their ideal of beauty was truth.

One reason why false modern Colonial is in such especially bad taste is because its style is the nearest approach to purest classic, which was that of Greece, and to follow the Greek ideal and disregard its peerless proportion, its purposeful sim-

Fig. 13
MEDIEVAL FRENCH FORTRESS

plicity, and its serene nobility, is simply to create a scarecrow and label it a man.

ANCIENT DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE

No trace of a Greek house remains standing, so it is to the Roman houses of Pompeii and Herculaneum, whose characteristics were the same, that we owe our ability to know what they were like—otherwise than by description. The plan of each was approximately the same: A small vestibule led to the atrium, an interior court in which the master of the house received strangers and conducted his business. In the richer dwellings there was a second, larger and more private court, also open in the center, but surrounded by a covered colonnade and therefore called the peristylium; this court was the outstanding feature of the house and is the prototype of the Spanish patio. There was a square pool for rain-water (the compluvium) in the center of both atrium and peristylium. The dining-room, called the triclinium, was beyond the peristylium. In the big houses, the peristylium was surrounded by the private rooms of the family, and there were often several dining-rooms. In the smaller, simpler houses, the family sleeping-rooms surrounded the atrium, which, partly covered over at one end, was also the principal living apartment. All—or at least nearly all—houses of the classic period were one-storied and without windows on the street side. Curiously enough, the street side of many of the larger houses was occupied by shops. Although these shops had no communicating doors with the house, they must have been operated or rented by the house-owner for profit—a practise more in keeping with the practical Romans than with the idealistic Greeks!

PAST THE DARK AGES

After the classic period, which ended with the fall of the Roman Empire (A.D. 476), the American house of to-day owes nothing further to Greece, and but little to Italy, for nearly a thousand years. Even though churches, public buildings and a certain few palaces of American millionaires have been copied from the succeeding Byzantine, Romanesque and Gothic periods, the American house of small or medium size —which is the one of our personal concern— has little affinity with the colossal fortress buildings of medieval days such as the one indicated in Figure 13, or with the vast intricacies of plan and composition pictured in Figure 14.

But the early years of the fifteenth century, which marked the beginning of the renaissance (or rebirth) of the classic style in Italy, also marked the change in architectural interest from temples and churches or so-called habitations that were actual citadels of defense, to the creation of the Florentine nobles' palaces with which our houses are closely allied. The earliest of these palaces were massively constructed of great force-resisting blocks of rough-faced stone (see Palazzo Strozzi, Fig. 15), with heavy barricading doors and iron-studded wooden shutters. The interiors, however, had open fireplaces and were furnished with chests and chairs, tables and benches, and the walls and ceilings were marvelously embellished with frescoes and paintings and tapestries —by the greatest artists of all time.

Much as Greek architecture reached its supremacy in the Age of Pericles, art in Italy reached its preeminence in Florence—under the patronage of the beauty-loving Cosmo de Medici—in the middle of the fifteenth century.

Fig. 14
FRENCH ROMANESQUE

PALLADIO

An outstanding figure of the Italian Renaissance—one to whom the type of American house which we call "Georgian" owes more than can be gaged—was Andrea Palladio, who not only printed full descriptions and measurements of the Classic Orders but made countless original designs and adaptations that are so familiarly commonplace to all of us as to seem natively our own.

There is not a town in the United States from Maine to Georgia, and westward to the Mississippi, that is without an

Fig. 15

MEDIEVAL FLORENTINE—PALAZZO STROZZI

example of the Palladian door—or more commonly the window—of triplex arrangement: a large arched opening flanked by two small flat-topped ones. Palladio devised the block-square house, with four-sided pitch roof (hip roof) and columned portico, and set the Georgian fashion for purely ornamental quoins at the corners (Fig. 34). In contrast to his many hip-roof designs, he still more especially sponsored the flat or "hidden roof" behind a balustraded cornice, as well as the geometrically balanced plan.

INIGO JONES

Palladio's influence on our architecture, however, was not direct. The first of our race who discovered and interpreted him was the greatest of English architects, Inigo Jones. Sent

by his patron, Lord Pembroke, to study in Italy toward the close of the sixteenth century, and enthralled by the temples in Rome, and by the classic designs of Palladio, he returned to England as the originator of the Classic Style which was later to be known as Georgian, though Inigo Jones died more than half a century before the first George came to the throne!

Fig. 16
ITALIAN RENAISSANCE—THE "GOLDEN PALACE" OF VENICE

His outstanding design was that for the vast palace which was to have been built for Charles the First at Whitehall, but many noblemen's estates which he built are still to be seen. Most beautiful perhaps of all his houses, but too dependent upon detail to be suitable for a thumb-nail sketch, is "Wilton" in Wiltshire. Its double-cube drawing-room, said by many to be the finest room in England, is lavishly ornamented in the Grinling Gibbons plus Medici Palace manner. Cobham Hall in Kent, a very beautiful exterior of his, is illustrated as an example of his style in Figure 18.

COLORED THREADS

Fig. 17
FRENCH RENAISSANCE —PERIOD OF FRANCIS I

As explained at the beginning, this chapter does not pretend to serve even partially as a history of architecture; in fact, it has barely traced a single thread in the world-wide tapestry of the architectural story as a whole. In other words, we merely picked out this long single thread of sand-brown color, as it were, at the portal of a rock-cut temple in Egypt; we followed it from temple to temple throughout three hundred years in ancient Greece; we

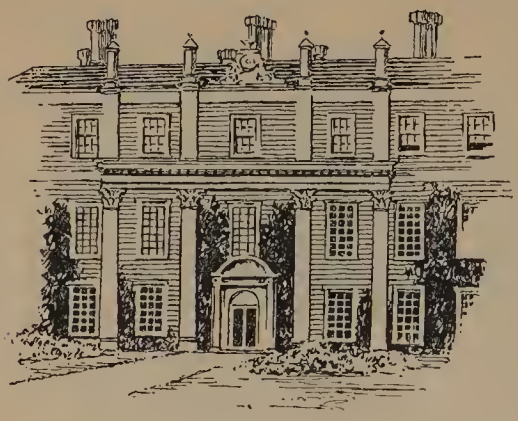


Fig. 18
COBHAM HALL, BY INIGO JONES

saw it change to a filament of purest gold through the Age of Pericles; we followed it further—still a thread of gold—to Rome, where it gleamed for nearly a thousand years; then it grew background-dark and disappeared for nearly a thousand years behind the threads of other patterns, but emerged, gold again, in the Renaissance in Florence; then disappeared until picked up again a century and a half later by Inigo Jones and carried by him to England. Burnished by Jones and his great successor, Wren, and by writers of books who came after them, it ends as a golden strand of Colonial purity, that embellishes every house of classic origin or design that is building to-day.

Besides this one thread, there are thousands of others. A parallel one, for example, is the brilliant line of color that marks the progress of English Tudor—the style known as Picturesque which has taken so strong a hold upon the imagination and the taste of our own time. This Tudor thread is double; one strand goes back to the first change from Romanesque to Gothic; its other strand begins in the fastness of the Saxon "keep," continues over the rooftops of the Norman castles and, meeting

Fig. 19
OPEN TIMBERED HOUSE—FOUND IN MANY COUNTRIES

its Gothic mate, glows brightly in the great houses known as "Tudor"—throughout the reigns of England's two Tudor Henrys, Edward and Mary—and bursts into fullest color in the reign of Elizabeth, which parallels—though a century later—the Renaissance in Florence. From the period of Elizabeth, it continued through the reign of the First James, whose name, in its Latin form, Jacobus, gave us the Jacobean style, to the end of the Stuarts. This thread was lost to sight under the classic thread of gold which shone first in the days of Anne and gleamed in full splendor throughout the reigns of the Georges, Victoria, and Edward, and has now appeared again, as glowing as before. Furthermore, it has crossed the ocean, and whether we call it Cotswold or Pennsylvania Jacobean, or Gothic, or a picturesque rendering of American gray-stone, its threads remain those of the English Renaissance, which is at the moment challenging the supremacy even of Colonial as the style of the greatest architectural importance in America to-day.

Fig. 20
PALLADIAN WINDOW

A third thread that cannot very well be left unnoticed is the red and yellow twisted strand that began in Spain and came with Cortez to Mexico, to California, and to Santa Fe, causing the color and design of our whole Southwest to be deeply ingrained with the temperament and character as well as the brilliancy of this Spanish inheritance.

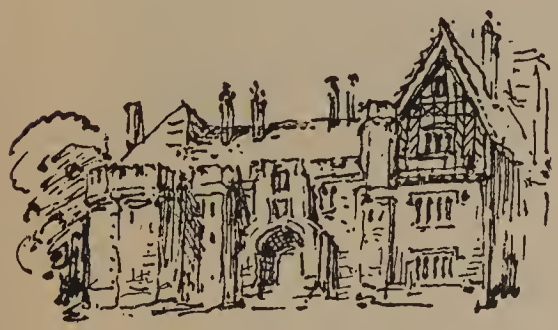


Fig. 21
ENGLISH ELIZABETHAN MANSION

And some of us, who think of Colonial houses

as none save those evolved by the colonists from England, all too carelessly forget that the Spanish-American settlers were flourishing in St. Augustine, Florida, and in Santa Fe, New Mexico, long years before the Pilgrim Fathers set sail for Plymouth, or the first hut or stockade was begun in Jamestown.

Fig. 22
ENTRANCE TO MADINGLEY HALL

III

THE STORY OF HOUSES IN AMERICA

OUR first colonists' homes were not frame-built with high-pitched roofs, but adobe-walled and flat-topped; though perhaps the early Spaniards who followed the Rio Grande from Mexico to the table-land of the lower range of the Rocky Mountains, on which they built our second oldest city, Santa Fe, should not be called colonists. Rather were they adventurers—a name at all events best suited to Santa Fe's outstanding hero of romance, Don Diego de Vargas.

The long, colonnaded, one-storied, flat-topped Governor's Palace still standing at Santa Fe (founded in 1605), and the restful and beautiful simplicity of the cloistered Mission buildings of California, which came a century and a half later, are native to the inhabitants of the Southwest, exactly as the buildings of white painted clapboards are native to the inhabitants of the Atlantic Coast.

FIRST HOUSES OF THE ENGLISH COLONISTS

The first dwellings, whether at Jamestown, Plymouth, or otherwhere, were of course not "houses" at all, but merely wigwam-shaped huts made of saplings and branches, covered with leaves and sod and whatever the colonists could find. The first *houses* built at Jamestown were of rough-hewn planks set up like palings. There were no cabins of logs, laid horizontally, log on log, in the manner of the modern log cabins, except in Georgia. All the earliest houses were box-plain, unpainted, with untrimmed, small-paned windows and plain framed doors, and were of distinctly medieval origin.

Of the typical embellishment of classical decoration, which we associate with Colonial design, there was not a trace.

The most characteristic feature of these houses was the overhang of the upper story, and the end posts of the upper floor were ornamented at the bottom with squarish hickory-nut shaped pendants, carved into the wood of the posts. Sometimes the overhang was supported by very simple blocks or brackets, which were the only embellishments, except the multiple form of the massive central chimney.

In the Scotch or Boardman house at Saugus, built in 1651—the oldest New England house of authentic age (see

Fig. 23

THE OLDEST HOUSE IN NEW ENGLAND

The Scotch-Boardman house at Saugus, Massachusetts

Fig. 23)—the roof across the front is like that of a plain straight-roofed barn, but at the back a lean-to carries the slope down like a train to within six feet or so of the ground. Its windows are fifteen-paned (square) on the first floor and twelve on the second. The Whipple house at Ipswich, Massachusetts, built in 1669, has diamond panes, a second-story overhang, and a third-story overhang that goes only two-thirds of the width of the house.

The windows of the Paul Revere house in Boston are Elizabethan diamond-paned and leaded. The overhang of the Hyland-Wildman house at Guilford is very slight; its pendants are merely shallow brackets, and its door has a row of panes across the top, while the back of the roof dips down like a train. The doors of the oldest houses were made of perpendicular planks on the outside, lined with horizontal

ones on the inside—the two fastened together with round-headed nails forming a dotted pattern of the whole.

Fig. 24
OLD HOUSE IN GUILFORD

Gradually the doorways were elaborated—not in the Tudor manner after which the earliest houses were built, but in the classic style—square columns, decorated, on each side of the door, and an angular, curved or even occasionally a broken pediment over it. At first a straight row of panes of glass was put over the doors to light the interior. Later fanlights appeared, and shutters or single-sash-width windows were put at the sides. Porticos gradually began to look like small temples, and classical Colonial bloomed into full flower.

THE CLASSIC BEAUTY OF COLONIAL AMERICA

All good examples of Colonial houses are direct copies of the Classic Orders—usually Roman Doric and Ionic. Occasional and supremely perfect examples of Georgian houses are Greek Ionic—which does not preclude the use of complementary detail taken from other orders. In the beautiful illustration, Plate 4, the plain Tuscan order of the door enhances the beauty of the Ionic columns, and vice versa.

The why and how of our skipping all the ages in between and producing no other forms but those known as Classic throughout our successive American Colonial Periods are easily explained, since for more than two thousand years every student of architecture has gone to the Classic Orders for study and inspiration.

American builders (carpenters) of the early colonies did not journey to Greece, it is true. But many of the architects of England did; moreover, they took meticulous measurements of the Greek temples, both of the originals at Athens

and of those patterned after them in Rome, and made equally meticulous drawings and published them in books. And it was these books, brought in sailing ships to our North and Middle Atlantic shores, and studied by our architects and carpenters, which supplied the models for our own Golden Age of Colonial architecture. That the purity, dignity and simplicity of the Doric and Ionic orders should have been so strongly inspiring to the American colonists is easy to understand. Especially since the Greek form of construction —although rendered in stone—had evidently developed from an earlier period of wood, and was therefore especially practical for reproduction in wood.

The Greeks embellished their temples lavishly with color, but that our own copies were invariably painted white was also easy to understand, since, color-printing being unknown, the books and illustrations were necessarily in black and white.

Among the first of these books which influenced the beauty of Massachusetts, Connecticut, Maryland, Virginia, South Carolina, and other New England and Southern settlements was one called *Lectures of Architecture,* written by Batty Langly, in 1727. It contained, besides carefully written "Instructions of Building," such definite measurements as: "Tuscan column 7 diameters, pedestal 2 diameters, diminution of shaft ¼ diameter at base, inter-columnation 4 diameters of base; Doric 8 diameters," and so on. *A Sure Guide to Builders,* also by Batty Langly, brought to America in 1729, begins with a chapter headed: "*An advertisement to Workmen to be first read by them before they proceed to the following work.*" This book also contains complete tables of classic measurements, including detailed working drawings of the variations of the Greek and Roman Orders as they were later interpreted by the great Italian architect, Palladio.

DID HE READ HIS OWN BOOK?

Fig. 25
ENGLISH GEORGIAN HOUSE BY SIR CHRISTOPHER WREN

But then, alas! after having thoroughly expounded classic beauty, Langly ran amuck and himself designed complete distortions which violated every principle that he had been at pains to teach! His *Treasury of Design,* which he declared to be "after the Grecian manner," was a veritable compilation of the grotesque (the name by which its style came actually to be known).

One so-called "column" was cut in four sections. In the top was exhibited a bearded head with bananas for ears, from which hung garlanded cloth and long chains falling to the center of the section below. This was decorated with a French sheaf of musical instruments, a sword and arrows, all resting on a barrel. In the next lower section, a squat pilaster with a panel down its center was fastened upon a second panel ornamented with vines. The sides of this section had projecting ears in the form of purposeless consoles. Carvings suggestive of pieces of sod were disposed at intervals upon another dwarf pilaster crowned with filigree and fastened vertically on a sod-trimmed square. And this completed monstrosity he labeled "Doric"—the severest and purest order of architecture in existence.

The books of William Pain were imported somewhat later. *The Practical Builder or Workmen's General Assistant* was written in 1742; another book of his was *The Practical House Carpenter.* Taking his work all in all, Pain had far better taste than Langly, and, besides repeating detailed measurements of classic proportions, included lovely circu-

Fig. 26
TYPICAL COLONIAL

lar and oval stairs and many plans and elevations of "Gentlemen's Houses"—perhaps the prototypes of some of the most beautiful old houses of Maryland, Virginia and South Carolina.

Of about the same period as the books of William Pain was *The Five Orders* of W. and J. Halfpenny, which included many drawing-room floor plans of London town houses, with typically inconvenient devices and designs suggestive of jig-saw chess pawns. An interesting feature to us is that the stables and coach-houses were often fitted into the ground floor, as garages are fitted in to-day. All big houses were planned on the big box flanked by two little boxes with galleries between. Like Langly, the Halfpennys designed many horrible examples of caryatid grotesques.

Stuart and Revett's *Antiques of Athens* was published in England in 1762, and Greek beauty was again brought to the colonists, who borrowed and studied and drew from the book and passed their knowledge on. Happily for Colonial architecture, the hideosities of Langly and the Halfpennys were too intricate for the American carpenters to cope with. They therefore clung to the classic measurements and rendered them with least ornamentation and greatest purity.

The great successor of Inigo Jones was Sir Christopher Wren. New England church steeples, especially, owe their beauty to his designs. Also certain H-shaped English —rather than Colonial— Georgian houses. The works of Inigo Jones were published in 1727, and those of Wren later. But the designs of the two great Renaissance Englishmen were

Fig. 27
OLD NEW ENGLAND HOUSE

for the most part of buildings suitable only to the estates of the richest nobles, and the books chosen for importation to America were devoted to detail that could better be adapted to houses of smaller and simpler style. (Figs. 18 and 25.)

THE MODERN COLONIAL EXTERIOR

The various methods by which one might attempt to classify Colonial types are quite as numerous as the types themselves. One might, first of all, put them in two general divisions:

Class A: Those which have been the development of native need; the straightforward adaptations by the various settlers—whether they came from England, Ireland, Wales, or from Holland, France, Italy, Germany or Sweden—who naturally adapted the architecture of their neighbors to their own modes of life. This class, therefore, includes the Colonial houses whose development has been utilitarian.

Class B: This includes houses of imported elaboration created solely for purposes of beauty—those, for instance, of the style known as Georgian, and later those of the Neo-Grec —and the various adaptations which were strongly influenced by Renaissance Italian, and, latest of all, by the French, though the last-named influence rarely goes beyond the interior.

A second way of making a classification is that of the art experts who divide Colonial architecture into First, Second, and Third Periods. This is simple enough in its segregation of the early houses of Tudor origin into the First Period, but is far from satisfactory—or even intelligible—to most of us in its later manifestations.

A third classification, most easily understood—and it seems to me the most logical—is that which lists all houses of the early period in three simple classes that developed in the northern, middle, and southern sections of the Colonies. These three types are still fully marked and easy to distinguish. They are:

Fig. 28
A M'INTIRE DOOR

1. New England Colonial.
2. Dutch Colonial.
3. Southern Colonial.

NEW ENGLAND COLONIAL

Those of New England are compact—box-like in shape, with a chimney in the center and the rooms grouped as closely around it as possible — for warmth. Some of them are shingled, some are clapboarded, some have lean-tos at the back or an L addition at the side. A few of them are of brick. These are usually called Georgian, though one and all are of the same Greek-Roman-Palladian-Jones-Wren family. All have classic doors. Many have beautiful details of cornice and window-trim. Typically they are dignified, conventionally well-bred and restrained. (See Figs. 26 and 30.)

DUTCH COLONIAL

The Dutch houses in New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey were low, broad, and more homelike in aspect than the austerely stiff-roofed and classically circumscribed houses of New England. The Dutch colonists took the gambrel roof, which occurred in several of the early medieval houses, added dormers to the steep lower half of the slope, carried the bottom outward

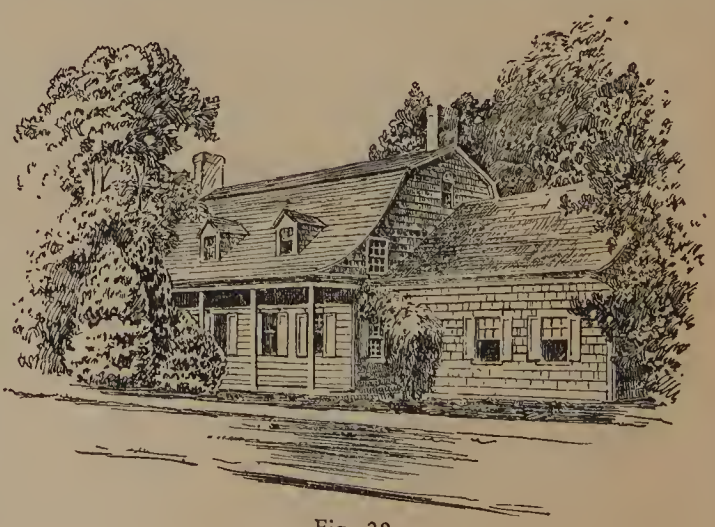


Fig. 29
DUTCH COLONIAL

in a curve beyond the face of the building, and put a row of square columns under the edge of it, thus devising a porch. (Fig. 29.) The authentic New England house has neither porch nor dormers.

The so-called Dutch Colonial house, which, excepting for a door that divided horizontally in half, had nothing especially suggestive of Holland about it, was almost always built

Fig. 30

THE GIBBS HOUSE, CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA

of stone, at least as high as the second story; sometimes the stone was left plain, sometimes whitewashed. The wood of the upper story was painted white.

SOUTHERN COLONIAL

In the South the houses were exactly the opposite, in purpose of plan, from those of New England. Chimneys, instead of being centrally placed, with the principal rooms surrounding them, were put as far away as possible and built on the outside of the farthest walls. The hall, eliminated from the typical New England house, was enlarged as much as possible in the Southern one; in houses of importance the compact squareness of the New England plan was discarded in favor of entirely separate units connected by corridors or

Fig. 31
WROUGHT-IRON BALCONIES, NEW ORLEANS

galleries. The moderate porch invented by the Dutch became an unrestrained feature of the Southern house, which in more than one instance ran around all four sides of the house, and on every story.

In Charleston, South Carolina, the porch was frequently made the connecting link between the street and the house by having the front door open not into a hall but onto an end of the porch. The Colonial houses of Charleston are, of course, noted the world over for their homelike charm as well as for their architectural beauty.

In such examples as the Gibbs house (Fig. 30) or the Brewton or Edward or Horry house, Georgian perfection of detail had reached its highest point in prerevolutionary days. Built about thirty years after the revolution, Homewood, in Baltimore, Maryland, is considered by the majority of critics to be "the Parthenon of America"; in other words, the most perfect example in existence of classic Colonial architecture. (For Colonial Interiors, see Chapter XIII.)

THE FRENCH HOUSE

The oldest native American-French houses are the serenely beautiful plantation villas of Louisiana, including a few in New Orleans itself. Very many of these lovely old houses are tumbling to pieces, but a number of the best are as perfect to-day as when they were built—about a hundred years ago. Most of them, imbued with the spirit of the "Greek revival," are closely related to Georgian in their classic tranquillity, but suggest a spacious comfort, a friendly hospitality, that compares with Georgian formality much as the homelike friendliness of

the Dutch Colonial compares with the austerity of the early architecture of Puritan New England.

All the most beautiful examples had two-storied colonnades, the railing of the upper floor fitting between the Doric columns that, rising from low square bases on the ground, supported the roof. The long French windows gave easy access to deep galleries, which, crossing one or more sides of

Fig. 32
CREOLE PLANTATION VILLA

every floor, often served in place of hallways; the stairway often built at one end of the gallery was sometimes open, but usually screened by shutters from the lawn or the street.

Others had interior halls and wide, curving stairways. These houses were entered from a paved gallery at ground level or by high flights of outside stairs that led to the gallery on the second floor. Occasionally, as at Rienzi Plantation, they were in a double curve. In these instances the basement floor was used for kitchen offices, and sometimes as quarters for the house slaves. But when the house was entered at the lower level, the parlors and dining-room were on that floor. In occasional instances, upper balconies—more fragile than

usual—were seemingly hung like wall-brackets on slender wooden columns suspended from the roof, apparently reversing the usual procedure of column support.

But in the Vieux Carré of New Orleans, the heavy classic two-storied columns of the villas—such as Belle Alliance, Seven Oaks, Burnside, Welham, and that most alluring house of fairy-tale beauty and name, "Shadows of the Tèche" (Fig. 32), were often replaced by slender iron colonnettes and wrought-iron railings and embellishments in floral designs.

The typical color of all the plantation villas, like that of their English Colonial cousins, was white or cream, with

Fig. 33
AMERICAN GEORGIAN

green blinds. Several in creole defiance of the fixed Colonial prejudices were actually pink with white marble trim, a color combination that, set in the dense shadows of tropical foliage, was lovely nevertheless.

The great beauty of the old houses of the French South lies in their simple but generous proportions, in their unassuming evidence of having been built by gentlefolk of taste and cultivation, and in the languorous luxuriance of the gardens upon which the balconies look out or down.

The present American version of the French house is distinctly that of the open timbered type of Norman cottage, which takes the place of a very simplified form of Tudor style. The French farm and manor houses of the Provinces include most charming and adaptable styles for American use, which have so far been almost entirely overlooked; at all

events, they have not been developed. The French high-roofed châteaux (modifications of Fig. 14), although we have many admirable examples of them in this country, are suitable only to dwellings of palatial size and to owners who carry formality to its furthest French extreme.

THE ENGLISH HOUSE IN AMERICA

This is not the Georgian of classic origin, but the type of building that is founded on the Gothic style, which in the fifteenth century in England became the fountainhead of the great Picturesque style of architecture—a style of entrancing beauty and flexibility, which is at the moment so greatly in favor as to threaten America's two-hundred-year allegiance to Colonial Georgian. Casually speaking, the Picturesque style of English house is divided into two periods: Tudor or Elizabethan, and Jacobean.

The characteristics of Tudor (really English Gothic) and Jacobean are much alike. Both are of stone or half-timber construction; both have oriel windows or square projecting bays and gable roofs, the whole following a picturesque "rambling" design.

Elizabethan is somewhat more formal in appearance. It is either E-shaped or H-shaped, and its façade is almost invariably a series of bays, while the entire building is crowned with a balustrade or parapet of stone. A typical Elizabethan house is usually a gigantic country seat built of smooth-faced stone or brick, with mullioned windows occupying more than half the walls. The doorways are usually set in deeply recessed round or Gothic framing; the chimneys are wonderfully columned, twisted, reed-like and ornate. See illustration of Madingley Hall (Fig. 22) and title page.

Fig. 34
ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF GEORGIAN

The Jacobean style may, for all need of this chapter, be said to continue the general effect of Tudor until the coming of Inigo Jones.

The modern English house in America, whether it is called Tudor, Elizabethan, Jacobean, or English cottage, is characteristically irregular in outline and is therefore adaptable to irregular sites. Its best style is rather limited to houses of importance, because it is of very expensive construction. The stone of which its walls are built are beautifully trimmed and mortised; its casements are metal-framed and the panes leaded; the roof is gabled, copper-valleyed, and bronze-guttered; its chimneys are tall and often elaborate, and its

Fig. 35

THE H-SHAPED HOUSE—FRENCH OR ENGLISH

roof is of slate or of the same stone as that of the walls, cut into thin shingle-like slabs. Of equally high cost of construction is that which shows its actual timbers, filled in with brick—precisely fitted—usually laid in herring-bone or other pattern. The eaves are either cut off flat in American fashion or curved in suggestion of thatch. But the shingles must on no account be mechanically wavy and roll at the edges like bolsters. An architect who is a past master in the art of producing beautiful shingle thatches is H. Lindeberg.

A much less expensive open-timber effect is obtained by building a surface of stucco, with exposed timbers simulated by flat boards stained to look like beams of weathered oak, and set into the stucco walls in imitation of timbered design. (Small houses of this type are listed under Norman Peasant. For Interiors, see Index.)

THE ITALIAN HOUSE IN AMERICA

Fig. 36
FLORIDA SPANISH

Italian architecture is less in vogue at the moment than it was some time ago, perhaps because of the present interest in Spanish, which, being interpretable with complete freedom from formality of style, appeals much more to the modern mood.

The general outline of the Italian plan is usually much the same as Georgian—in a different dress. In other words, the house is block-square, with windows evenly balanced. But stucco—sometimes painted in Arabesque design—takes the place of wood or brick. An arcaded loggia is a characteristic adornment, balustrades are used instead of iron handrails, the walls are embellished with decoration. Roofs, if they are of tile, should be very low in pitch or hidden behind a parapet. (For Italian details of furnishing or garden, see Index.)

THE AMERICAN SPANISH HOUSE

Native mixtures of Mexican, Pueblo Indian, and Spanish adobe houses are typical of the southern half of California, and American adaptations of Spanish origin completely dominate the architecture of Florida, where it has become exceedingly ornamental, elaborate, and often palatial. Many American-Spanish houses are entrancingly beautiful, perfectly appointed and in best taste. On the other

Fig. 37
CALIFORNIA SPANISH

hand, numerous examples are inclined to be vulgar—and many are far more than "inclined."

Too many varieties of tiles are as bad for digestion as too many varieties of cakes for tea; too much color can become quite as torturing to the eye as blistering sunburn is to the skin, and the Rococo tendencies of spurious motives too loudly proclaim illiteracy. But, handled with taste, knowledge and *restraint*, the Hispano-American house, in a hot climate, is ideal. Its overthick walls are designed to keep out the heat; its doorless openings encourage the circulation of air; its untrimmed surfaces are beautifully suitable to the embellishment of tropical foliage; its patio—especially one that is arcaded on its northern side—grants a shaded outdoor retreat —at one side of it or another—for every hour of the day.

(Various ways of beautifying this most lovely feature, as well as details of the Spanish interior, will be found in Chapter XIII.)

AMERICAN-BORN, LEFT-OVERS, ADAPTED PERIOD, AND "JUST HOUSES"

The term American-Born, in architecture, includes, the adobe pueblo of the Southwest American Indians, the log cabin, the false-front shack, and the bungalow.

The story of the rise of the *Adobe Pueblo* to prominence is as fantastic as a fairy-tale. Not only has it become the "Spanish castle" of the Southwestern millionaire and the prototype of New Art's monolithic modern house, but it would seem to have been the inspiration for the soaring, story-above-story, monolithic skyscraper, the most outstanding achievement in the architectural beautification of utility that America—or any other country—has produced.

The Log Cabin, on the other hand, has shown no adaptability to further development. It is often enlarged, made multiple, and fitted with every modern comfort in the Adirondacks and other mountain resorts of fashion, but it remains as unchanged in detail as in construction.

Dwight James Baum, Architect

THE HIGHEST FORM OF CLASSIC GEORGIAN

[PLATE 4]

Dwight James Baum, Architect

A GEORGIAN HOUSE OF BEAUTY AND TRANQUIL DIGNITY

[PLATE 5]

One wonders why the log cabin is not made use of more as a mountain home of comfort and suitability. One finds not half as much use made of it as there might be. The wooden house in a mountain region always is rather suggestive of a packing-box dropped along the trail. One is inclined to call up the expressman and tell him about it, so that it can be claimed and taken away!

The False-Front Shack has no place in our pages, really, except that it was such a typical feature in every new settlement of our Western pioneers, who seemingly inherited an instinct for ancient Rome's love of effect. The idea was to make a row of one-storied houses look two-storied. Almost every Main Street of every town in America had—or still has—examples of this "making the town look grander" feature. In fact, there are examples of it even in New England, whose people are as truth-loving as the Greeks.

A Bungalow is any building of any period—recognizable or not—that is one-storied. If two-storied, it is a cottage, castle, house, or what you will, but not a bungalow.

The dictionary definition of a bungalow is a building of one story, with a veranda around it, that is found in India. Not a word about its having become the most typically American small house possible to think of, nor about the fact that its only suggestion of India is when it is two-storied and thereby disqualified.

The bungalow of charm is most usually a one-storied dwelling built of shingles or of stucco, with a shingled roof—on occasions a roof of not too heavy tile. The more nearly it comes to looking cottagey or quaint, the more attractive it is. And yet if it have dormer windows, it supposedly turns into a cottage. For that matter, if the roof be flat, it then ceases to be a cottage! But, after all, what difference in a name?

So let us say that a very ugly example of house, whatever it is called, is the turtle type that is low and squat and closely covered by an enormous roof—a roof supported on chunky wooden spools or concrete sausages, giving the impression that, like the turtle, its defense is against attack from above—

which may perhaps be merely the precaution of the wise against tumbling airplanes. As a matter of fact, these overheavy roofs are obviously derived from the thatch of English cottages. But the material of the latter, being what it is, gives no uncomfortable sense of weight such as the same measurement of solid wood or, still worse, tile, produces.

A new style of roof that threatens the Middle West is exactly like a mushroom in shape, thickness, and support at its center. This style, in faithful copy of the vegetable, is the production of a leading modernist who refuses to join the ranks of "mere copyists of architectural precept." Which naturally suggests the question: Which would one rather copy—a Greek temple or a vegetable?

Another bad type of bungalow is the one that looks like a railroad car or a Noah's ark. Sometimes, it is true, if the lot is very narrow and the space available to build on is of bowling-alley shape, very little can be done but to build a Noah's ark type of house—if it *must* be one-storied. But the monotony of a too-long-and-narrow house can be somewhat broken with any one of a variety of bay windows—little grilled squares on a Spanish or Italian house, or box-shaped ones of leaded panes on an English or Normandy house, or cottage casements, or village-shop ones on almost any sort of house.

Still another unpleasing bungalow is the roofless Mexican type that gives a scalped-by-the-Indians impression. Moreover, the surface of adobe or of stucco can easily be hideous; if it looks too patty-caked and smoothed round the edges, it looks overheavy as well as overhandled. It also is hideous when its surface is lumpy and rough, as though children had flung its material at it by the handful. Plaster or stucco should be coarse or fine—but much better too fine than too coarse—in proportion to its size. A very small wall surface should be very fine and have fairly sharp edges so as not to *look* overthick.

Also a warning as to color: In spite of the fashionable appreciation of sunburn as an embellishment for young

women of to-day, no less than for young men, a deep shade of terra-cotta is *not* a beautification of the exterior of any house—be it a bungalow or an Aztec temple.

Left-Overs are houses which belong to periods which have gone—perhaps temporarily, perhaps permanently—out of style. A list of them includes the Mansard mansion, the Victorian jig-saw house, American Gothic structures, Wood-Lizzies, French châteaux built of shingles, and all types that we no longer find pleasing. Many of these will be considered in Chapters VI and XIX.

Adapted Periods is a term that includes the majority of new houses. A few examples that are building to-day are faithful copies or interpretations of old examples. But nearly all are adaptations—reductions in size, usually—to modern American needs. Sometimes adaptations are so liberal as to be scarcely traceable to their originals. Sometimes this is excellent, sometimes the contrary. The rule for adaptation should be to interpret the spirit of the model—or make an independently new design. To attempt to build a house of a certain style and then to add details that are diametrically opposed, or to leave out items of characteristic importance, is to produce a mongrel.

If one builds—or remodels—a simple house of no great allegiance to precise details of style, one can have an entirely charming house of its own quite personal variety, without causing criticism. But to take a Tudor design, for instance, and copy its detail carefully except for a too-high and too-sharp roof which comes eccentrically down on one side with a swing-to-the-left curve, for all the world like a huge Spencerian capital A, is to produce ugliness. Or to build a bastard Colonial house, with a higher second story than first story, and with the entire façade broken by jogs and angles, is to proclaim that architecture was *not* included in the owners' studies at school.

It is really harder to build an ugly small house to-day than to build an attractive one. Books and magazines as well as most neighborhoods are so full of lovely examples, one

would have to be totally unseeing not to choose well. And really bad new examples are very few.

Just Houses means just that! It means houses that attempt no definite period, though they perhaps suggest relationship to a certain style. Among them are certain bad ones already noted among the "left-overs"; but as a type "just houses" are those that have been built by local carpenters, usually, of local style and of local material—than which there can be nothing better for the building of a suitable house. Most of the styles that we especially cherish are so constructed. The houses of Pennsylvania, built of local stone, straight and plain and comfortable; the houses of clapboards and shingles in all woodland districts; the houses of brick in Maryland—block-plain, most of them, with plain, straightforward plan, and additions built as needed by the enlarging families who occupied them—cannot well be other than good, likeable and personable.

IV

THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF ARCHITECTURAL BEAUTY

NO matter to which type or period a house may belong, the fundamental requirement of every architectural design is that it shall combine utility, strength and beauty.

In addition to the three requirements, the ancient Greeks included truth. This meant that each item of building material actually served the purpose to which it pretended. Blocks were truly blocks, not facing; they disliked pilasters, which had no depth and carried no weight. Greek columns actually supported the entablature, and so on. The exact opposite of the Greek ideal is the modern building of steel with the façade actually a trimming.

UTILITY

Utility means sincerity of design to the purpose for which it is intended. Meaning that a dwelling, whether it be a palace or a cottage, should look homelike. Anything more useless than a placid suburban house built in imitation of a medieval castle, with bastions and turrets designed for purposes of defense, is not conceivable. And yet every steeple-towered and moat-surrounded feudal château in France was faithfully copied in hundreds of wooden houses during American architecture's darkest hour about fifty years ago. A modern example of architectural insincerity is a Spanish patio in a cold Northern climate, where it serves principally as a container for half-frozen rain and snow.

The purpose of any jail door is to bar entrance—or exit. The purpose of a house door is to invite—though its invita-

tion is naturally more reserved than that of the sign-shouting indiscrimination of the entrance to a shop.

The purpose of a roof is shelter and not an erratic display of angles, though an exception is allowed in designing the picturesque sky-line of a house on the summit of a hill or mountain. And although the more protectingly it fits down upon a house the more snug and secure it seems, it should, of course, not smother it.

The ideal of architectural purpose was perfectly expressed by Inigo Jones, who exacted that a building be "solid, proportionable according to rule, masculine and unaffected."

STRENGTH

Strength means obviously sufficient solidity for weight, size and purpose. To continue the portrait of the roof, a one-storied bungalow should not be buried under its weight of roof supported on fat sausage columns and the whole suggesting that, like Atlas, it might bear the weight of the world. Any solid chunk of a house so massively built that you feel its weight might easily be converted into a vault for safe-keeping or into an ice-breaker in the Arctic, has strength that is out of scale, and is therefore not good architecture.

On the other hand, if you feel that a building might topple over, or blow down, then there is equal fault in its structure or design. The Leaning Tower of Pisa was an accident and freak—of use only as an example of the law of gravity. It is not a model of architectural perfection. The ground upon which it was built gave way on one side. Had it given way a little more the building would have fallen flat.

The house of ideal strength is one that gives the impression that it is standing at rest in tranquil security.

BEAUTY

Beauty that is worthy of the name must delight the eye, exalt the spirit, and satisfy the intelligence. But, first of all, there must be suitability to purpose and to situation.

Every chapter in this book will probably emphasize the necessity for suitability, because suitability is always the keynote of good taste. As beautiful clothes must be suitable to the hour, the place, the occasion, and the wearer, a beautiful house must be suitable to its situation, to the personality of its owners, to their manner of living.

It is true that there might be utilitarian suitability without a vestige of beauty, but it is equally true that there cannot be a vestige of beauty without suitability. Suitability to purpose has been noted above; suitability to situation includes style, scale, and building material.

There are two directly opposed ideals in architectural design: the Formal, which expresses the Greek ideal, and the Picturesque, which expresses the Gothic. The Greek ideal was of a building majestically at rest. It was never flung on the ground, but was ceremoniously placed upon a terrace or platform, exactly as a statue is placed upon a pedestal designed not merely to support it, but to display it. The platform on which a Greek temple stood emphasized the building as a work of Art. The Gothic ideal, on the contrary, is of a building that rises spontaneously from its foundations, as though it had of itself sprung to life in marble or in stone. Its base is seemingly part of the rock or hillside it has sprung from; its roofs, which are usually multiple and are of varying heights, seem part of the landscape's own profile. An ideal house of self-born type stands on two great rocks that descend precipitously into the waters of a New York lake. It is impossible to tell where the boulders cease and the mortised stones of the matching walls begin.

The Picturesque house is especially suitable on a sloping or irregular hillside, because being itself irregular it adapts itself to the conformation of the landscape.

Native building material—especially stone—is more sympathetic to location than foreign materials, which are often difficult to naturalize. Gray boulders, cut so as to leave moss-and-lichen-covered surfaces, are characteristic of moss-and-lichen-covered surroundings of our Eastern

mountains. The adobe houses of New Mexico, the Spanish style prevalent in Florida, the thatched-roof cottage on a wooded lane, the Colonial houses of the Southern or New England towns, the Normandy houses on sloping hills, Italian villas overlooking formal gardens, Georgian houses of importance on important city streets are all types suitable to location. The ideal of suitability to situation is the house that belongs so exactly where it stands that it cannot be moved elsewhere without loss to the site as well as to itself.

THREE STRUCTURAL ATTRIBUTES

The three structural attributes of beauty are Form, Proportion and Scale, and Balance.

Form is dependent upon structure; structure is dependent upon material to be used; and material is dependent upon location. For example, the adobe houses of the desert—whether in the East or in our own Southwest—are naturally expressed in very primitive structure and limited to primitive form.

Form means the outline of design or shape; the successful materialization of the idea. A Spanish house in nothing suggests the form characteristic of Colonial. An attribute of form is texture: smoothness or coarseness of material appropriate to the style of design. The walls of a Spanish house are rough; those of a Georgian one are smooth. There are also innumerable conventions which define the colors suitable to certain types of buildings, such as that Colonial houses are never painted pink, though Italian villas may be.

Proportion and Scale—There is no greater test of an architect's inherent talent than the infallibility of his sense of proportion. Proportion means fitness and harmony in all relations of measure. Scale means size of decoration in proportion to object decorated, or of detail to the whole of which it is a part.

For instance, a room is in proportion when its height is suitable to its length and width. Its details are in scale when

they are in proportion to the size of the room and to one another. A room may be in beautiful proportion, and yet a detail too small, an ornamental design too big, a door too low, may be out of scale.

A ceiling either seven feet six inches high or eighteen feet high would be equally out of proportion in a room twenty-five feet square. An ideal height would be between eleven and twelve feet. A seven-and-a-half foot ceiling could not be borne in a room bigger than about fifteen by twenty feet, or fourteen by twenty-two feet, which would then have to be very "knowingly" furnished to obviate the feeling of the ceiling coming down on one's head. Ornamentation on a very low ceiling makes it even lower. An eighteen-foot ceiling, on the other hand, would make a medium-sized room feel like the bottom of an elevator shaft. If flat and untrimmed, the effect of height would be increased. An eighteen- or nineteen-foot ceiling in a room thirty by forty-five feet is perfection—either with a proportionate cornice, if in a Georgian room, or a groined or timbered and otherwise relieved overhead decoration, in an Italian room. A mantel in proper scale would be at least six feet high and seven or possibly eight feet wide. The trims or pediments of doors and windows must also be of proportionate depth and height. Under certain circumstances the effect of size is appreciably increased or diminished by means of weight. A mantel, if of sufficiently fine and delicate design, may be overlarge in measure and yet fit with perfect proportion in a low-ceilinged medium-sized room. Or one which is somewhat small would be adequate in a larger room if it had sufficient weight. This would not answer, of course, if an object were too greatly out of scale.

Texture means surface finish or material suitable to use. You wouldn't trim a chiffon evening dress with bands of tweed, or put a covering of coarsest weave on a fragile satinwood chair. Texture includes fineness or coarseness, whether of walls, trim or furnishing; both of design and execution. Texture is purposely rendered in fineness or crudeness, in sim-

plicity or sophistication, according to each detail of period or style.

Balance, sometimes called *repetition,* is the equilibrium between one side of a house—or a room or piece of furniture—and another side. It is most easily illustrated in furnishing. All tall pieces gathered at one end of a room produce the feeling that the room is capsizing. One tall piece on one side may, however, be balanced by an object of weight on the other. If you want to put a little picture on one side of the mantel and a big one on the other, the little picture can be made to balance the big one quite easily, if on a table under the little picture you put a lamp, and nothing under the big one.

In the same way, if one side of an irregular house is short and the opposite side is long, evergreen trees against the short side will restore its harmony. A steeple on a church or a tower at the end of a building is equalized by sufficient length of building to balance the height of the steeple or tower.

Other attributes of architectural composition include *Rhythm,* meaning that the eye is carried easily from contour to contour without being brought up sharply by an obstructing height or gap, and *Emphasis,* meaning that which attracts and holds the attention—for instance, the lavish ornamentation of a Spanish door set in an otherwise unbroken surface of wall. *Unity* means that each separate item or part of a building or series of buildings is designed in harmonious adjustment with every other item of form and scale, so as to enhance the appearance of the whole.

NEIGHBORHOOD DESTROYERS

In marked opposition to unity are the out-of-key houses of a certain species of householders to be found in almost every town in the United States—a species for whom there is no better name than neighborhood destroyers. Curiously enough, they are almost always persons who consider them-

selves honorable members of the community—who wouldn't take a mill not rightfully theirs, nor take advantage of a neighbor in any manner of dealing whatsoever. And yet they will unthinkingly take something of far greater value than the neighborhood's petty cash by putting up a discordant building or splashing it with a violently jarring color and robbing the whole town of its beauty.

On an old South Carolina street, for instance, a rich man of this type—they are nearly always rich men—put up a pile of distorted architecture that was not only a monstrosity of unsuitability itself, but destructive to the beauty of the entire street—exactly as a great ink-blot on the face would destroy a beautiful portrait.

In a New England village, on a hill which dominates the clustering white- and green-shuttered houses, one who is obviously insensible to neighborhood beauty has built a gigantic bungalow with pink stucco walls and a blood-red roof. A short time before, it was a village of exquisitely fragile Colonial beauty that motorists were wont to go miles out of the beaten track to see. It is utterly ruined. Even the pink-faced, red-turbaned monster looks uncomfortably insecure on the seeming foundation of the fragile little dwellings huddled at its base. Yet the owner of the monster came to live among the fragile dwellings because he thought them beautiful! How could he then destroy them? What can be done about it is not very clear, since each house-builder has the right to build what house he pleases!

If each of us in every town would care something about the unity of the streets we live on, the towns of America would be the most beautiful in the world. But a haphazard collection of unrelated styles of architecture can never look anything but mongrel. Just go and look at them! Spanish, English, Colonial, Rococo, Byzantine, Italian, German, French, and the uncompromising cube plainness of the new monolith—parading down a whole street length—discord if there ever was discord! Perhaps the only way to create a town of beautiful accord would be to start with a brand-

new development and lay out its streets with restrictions of each, to the type of its name.

COULD IT BE DONE?

Washington Road would be all old Colonial. Via Appia would be Italian. On Old Norman Road, English cottage and Norman peasant might mix quite nicely. In such a town the Browns or the Perugis or the Latours choose the style of house suitable to their ancestors or their taste, and buy a lot in the midst of neighbors whose houses will be in unity with their own. Makeshift Way could be a segregated section for any sort of near-type house of untraceable pedigree, with permanent corners for those who cannot be trusted to keep their architecture the required percentage pure.

The above suggestion is not written in jest. One need merely bring to mind the beauty of French New Orleans, or the enchantment of so many New England or Southern houses that are so truly lovely because the type of old Colonial pervades the entire place; in fact, having a personal preference for Colonial, I myself live half the year in an enchanting New England seacoast town where a white-painted, green-shuttered and flower-bordered house of my own is duplicated by all its uncles and its cousins and its aunts!

V

IF YOU ARE GOING TO BUILD

IF you are a prospective house-owner, three courses are open to you: you can build, you can remodel, or you can buy ready-made. The advantage if you build is that you can decide upon each separate detail of design, so as to suit your taste and requirements. The disadvantage is that you have to pay for the house as its construction progresses, and yet are homeless throughout the time it is building; moreover, it cannot be seen except "on paper," which is, for some people, difficult. There is also a popular belief that all custom-made articles are of high cost (not necessarily true), and that the final cost of house-building is always more than you think it is going to be (99 times out of 100, true).

On the other hand, if you buy a new house (or an apartment) ready-made, the advantages are, that you can see it actually without having to imagine what it will look like; that you can move into it at once; and that you know exactly what it is going to cost. The disadvantages are, that it is "as built"; that you must judge it by appearance only; and that its price is not—value for value—likely to be economical.

The cost of a house that you *build* ought to be less than the price of a house put up by a building corporation, because, although building in quantity is cheaper, the profit to the promoter—which includes not merely principal and interest on the money he has put into it, but also reasonable compensation for risk—must almost necessarily raise the total to a higher figure than the cost of building for yourself *ought* to reach.

The third course—that of remodeling—is becoming every year more popular. In addition to the beautification of full-grown—even if neglected—shrubs and trees, the ad-

vantage of buying an old house, especially one out of repair, is that you can usually buy it for a song. The disadvantage is the uncertainty as to how much the song may mount up to by the time the renovations are completed. If no structural changes are necessary beyond the putting in of a partition or two and a small amount of plumbing, estimate of improvement and repair is simple enough. But the moment you begin tearing down—that is another story (which will be discussed at length in the next chapter). Meanwhile, let us begin with the problems of building:

If you have found a site that you like, you have perhaps already visualized the style of house you want to put on it. Perhaps you know so definitely the house you want that you are thinking of building without an architect. Of course, if the house is to be very simple and unpretentious; if you have had a certain amount of experience in building; if the new house is to resemble others in the neighborhood; and, finally, if you have a reliable contractor, he may be able to produce the ideas you have in mind. Or you may be able to do your own designing; or perhaps you are buying ready-made plans which can be used as they are, or modified slightly to suit your requirements.

But under normal circumstances, no matter how well you think you know what you want, the wisdom of engaging an architect cannot be overemphasized. Not merely because the architect is likely to make a more beautiful house, but because, in spite of his ten-per-cent.-over-all fee, the chances are greatly in favor of your saving money in the end.

CHOOSING AN ARCHITECT

House-building is not a simple process for the inexpert. The details that come up for decision are unceasing, and more often than not they involve conundrums which only the technical expert can answer. And if you "guess wrong" the result is ugliness, inconvenience, unsuitability, or that most wasteful of all extravagances, tearing down and doing over.

A good architect foresees the difficulties, saves the redoing here, the wasteful and unnecessary outlay there; he sees, from the first setting up of the frame, that the outline of the building is right. If something seems wrong, he does not "hope it will look better later on." He knows either that it will or that it won't, and in the latter case he adjusts it at the beginning. He also sees that the materials used are those which the specifications call for, and that each detail of the house is assembled as it should be, straight through the entire operation. The architect is personally responsible, and should, of course, be held so.

Without an architect the building progresses exactly as a ship at sea with no one at the steering wheel. Few people can even visualize size, let alone form; fewer still know anything at all about detail. Not one in a thousand knows good building from bad; and not one in ten thousand knows or can produce, *even when he knows,* the qualities that give a house personality and charm. Any builder can put up a hard block of a house that looks as though made of cast iron or tin. Only an architect of talent (or an owner of genius) can produce the subtleties of line and proportion that alone create a building of beauty.

Thousands of houses of charm—one might almost say the majority of those that have *most* charm—are furnished without the services of a decorator; but to build a house without an architect is another matter. If you, as an amateur, have ever spent days of intensive thought and effort trying to draw a perfect plan—let alone an exterior to fit the plan—and then had a really good architect in a few moments reshape your plan and obviate each of your difficulties as though by magic, you will understand why you should have your house built by a good architect.

True, all architects are not *good* ones! Not by any means! And bad ones are a total loss! Moreover, a poor or inexperienced architect gets possibly the same fee as the best one. Bad ones may be very charming neighbors or friends, or relatives. It is difficult to discriminate against one who is a

near neighbor or a dear friend, in favor of a stranger who is nothing to you at all; but, after all, delight in the comfort and beauty of your home surroundings is too vitally important to risk, even to neighborly interest or dear friendship. Surely this is a sufficient reason why you should choose an architect whose work you like, and not let liking for a man whose work you don't like warp your judgment.

Quite aside from a question of taste, business relationships are best kept on a business basis. It is much better to keep Jim your friend, apart from his profession, than to make him your architect and be miserable about a dozen things that you cannot bear to tell him because he is your friend. It is very hard to say: "Jim, I think less than nothing of the way your are looking after our job!" But you can say to a total stranger: "Mr. Blank, we are not satisfied with the supervision that has been given our house. Whoever is to blame for the plastering will have to have it redone." Or: "The wood that is being used for the library paneling will all have to come down." Or—and much worse: "The roof line is very stiff and awkward; it is not a bit like the picture you made of it."

Nothing like this may occur, it is true; the house from beginning to end may progress without a flaw or hitch. The probabilities in that direction, however, are not strong. In building, it is almost inevitable that there will be a certain number of mistakes, delays, additional charges; these are readily handled on a business basis, but may easily create an uncomfortable strain on an old friendship.

Remember also that architects are more or less specialists. Some have genius for gigantic buildings, some have a beautiful knowledge of a definite style. One man's taste is for the picturesque, another's for the severely classic, a third is happiest in a city house plan, a fourth specializes in country places, a fifth builds nothing but Spanish houses.

If you are building a small or medium-sized house it will be necessary to select an architect who lives within a reasonable distance, or who has other work in your neighborhood,

because the cost of overseeing a small building from a great distance is obviously out of all proportion. This consideration is, of course, apart from the still more essential requirement that your architect be one whose special taste expresses your own. If possible, you should consult him before the land is bought, so that he may give his advice on the suitability of the site, both as to beauty and as to the natural adaptability of its conformation and exposure. He would be able to point out, for instance, that while the north slope of a mountain may overlook an entrancing view, the sunless exposure would make an appealing house impossible there—unless you prefer perpetual shade. He might also call your attention to important considerations of cost, such as the fact that foundations on steep hillsides are always expensive. Foundations on rocky mountainsides, I may add, are liable to cost fabulous sums. Foundations on flat sandy land are least expensive—unless in a quicksand district. Friends of my own, who bought a beautiful shore-front site, found a quicksand in the very place where the cellar was to go. It drank up thousands of dollars before bridging methods were found that were secure enough to assure the safety of the house. This, however, was an unusual experience.

YOUR LIST OF REQUIREMENTS

The first thing that the architect will want to know is how big a house you must have, and what are the requirements necessary for your convenience and comfort. It is very necessary for him to know whether you run your household according to fastidious standards or whether you live in the way known as "simple." It might also be well to ask your definitions of the words "fastidious" and "simple." Do you want a little room or a big one set apart in perpetually perfect order for the reception of friends or acquaintances? Must there be a study for your husband, a play-room for your children, or are you willing to have whoever-it-may-be come into the living-room where you or various members of

your family may be cluttering up desk or tables with any of the many writing, pasting, sorting or game-playing pursuits? Would you be comfortable in one big informal living-room to sit in, and eat in, and dance in, too? Or must you have a dining-room that will seat twelve, eighteen, twenty-four or more? In this case do you prefer a formal drawing-room of size and a snug little book-room to sit in when alone? Or, on the other hand, would you be content with a small-sized sitting-room and a tiny dining-room to seat no more than six at a pinch?

Are you going to fill your house with so many objects of virtu and so much furniture of tender fragility that the dusting and polishing of each of these treasures will take many hours of one person's time every day? Or are your rooms going to be fairly empty so that sufficient dusting can be done in scarcely any time at all? In other words, shall you need many servants' rooms, or few, or one, or none at all?

Do you want people passing by to be impressed by the size of your house—and its cost—or do you prefer to have its street view present as inconspicuous an effect as possible? Do you love beauty of interior for the pleasure it gives you personally? How do you spend your time? Do you read much? Do you play cards much? Do you have much company, and if so, of what sort? Must each member of the family have a room and bathroom of his own? Must you have closet room for endless clothes and personal possessions, or will a dozen hangers be more than enough? How much silver must you find safe or shelf room for? How much linen do you use? How many servants must be provided for? How much space is required for special storage, games or hobbies?

The answers to these questions naturally determine the size of house necessary to your comfort. The next question is that of style.

WHICH STYLE OF HOUSE?

If you are entirely uncertain—perhaps somewhat confused by thinking of "styles" as a series of chronologically selected details, grouped and catalogued according to the when and where of their origins—this question may be much easier to answer if you merely divide all styles of architecture into five general physical types:

1. The Severe Formal.
2. The Minor Formal.
3. The Balanced Picturesque.
4. The Irresponsible Picturesque.
5. The Blank-Face.

The outstanding characteristic of the *Formal* house is undeviating regularity. A line drawn perpendicularly through the center of its front elevation will go directly through the center of the front door and every detail on one side is repeated in exact reverse on the other. In fact, it is a drafting-room custom to draw only one-half of the façade, and, holding a strip of mirror on the center line, let the reflection complete the design. Houses that belong in this category may be either rectangular E-shaped or H-shaped, half H, or three-block English, Italian, French, or American Georgian. The Formal house requires an absolutely flat setting, which may be an artificially built terrace or platform, or may be a natural park or table-land.

The Minor Formal means merely a simple house of unpretentious size that is evenly balanced in design. Thousands of small houses that have a door in the middle and one or two evenly balanced windows on either side, with regularly spaced windows above, should sit tranquilly also on platforms of land.

The Balanced Picturesque is suitable to all hillsides. By "balance" is not meant "repetition," but adjustment of height to weight. A house should give the feeling that its balance is comfortably secure. Its heaviest—central—weight

is placed either on the crown of the hill, with supporting wings packed close against it, or on the middle level with a lower wing on the higher, and a smaller but steeper wing (or possibly a tower) on the lower. The roof of the largest unit is slightly higher than those of the smaller units, but the general outline follows the contour of the hillside against which it is placed. Such houses are sometimes built of stucco or half-timber, but the finest examples are usually of stone that is natural to the location. They include English Tudor, replicas or adaptations suggestive of the Feudal French, German (Rhine castles), Hill-Town Italian, or our own American rendering of moss-and-lichen-covered graystone. Although especially suited to wooded-hill surroundings, these houses may quite perfectly be placed on level ground and are for that reason far more adaptable than the inflexibly Formal house, which must *never* be thrust upon stilts on one side, with chin dug into the earth on the other.

The Irresponsible Picturesque includes every low, unassuming building which, pretending to neither style nor form, can literally perch or huddle or ramble at will almost anywhere; in a meadow or on a hillside, on a sand-dune or in the woods. Its type includes the Spanish hacienda, a collection of small buildings unevenly surrounding a central courtyard. It also includes all dwellings of styleless category, built in irregular units or composed of a multiplicity of wings and galleries; or a collection of log cabins or farm buildings grouped closely together or connected by galleries or colonnades.

The Blank-Face includes every house that turns its back to the street, or that surrounds itself in Spanish, Chinese or other Far-East fashion with blank walls. Many important houses of the old nobility on the left bank of the Seine in Paris do this. On the street, there is nothing to be seen but a high wall with an ordinary or even shabby little workman's house which is entered through big wooden doors. But when the doors are opened to you, you see a neat porter's lodge on the inside, and find yourself in a garden facing a beautiful

Peabody, Wilson & Brown, Architects

A DIGNIFIED AND HOMELIKE HOUSE OF THE COLONIAL TYPE

[PLATE 61]

Firm of Kenneth M. Murchison, Architects

WHEN THE HIGH ROOF OF A LITTLE HOUSE IS MADE NECESSARY BY ITS SITUATION

[PLATE 7]

house entirely hidden from the street. This same intention, though somewhat differently expressed, is found in the city or suburban house that has a perfectly plain façade set flat to the street, with a front door on one side, a kitchen door on the other, and as many windows as need be with straight hanging curtains. Houses of this type are rapidly growing in popularity in America. By means of slight detail and characteristic doors and windows, almost any type of architecture might be indicated in conformity with neighboring houses. The kitchen and all other service rooms would face the street, while the living rooms of the family would face toward a garden at the back.

If the house is plain and the plot is wide, a high wall continues the façade on either side, and a door in this wall should lead by way of a kitchen yard into the kitchen. But if there is no side lot, the kitchen door opens on the same façade as the front door.

This turning of the house front-side to the back is greatly to be commended, since the façade overlooking the garden allows an architect infinitely greater possibilities for the development of charm and beauty than a façade on the street. Moreover, a plain exterior that says nothing about the beauty within is always sympathetic to best taste, whereas an outside ornamented for show and an interior that is neglected or cheap is like nothing so much as a woman in a sable coat and ninety-eight-cent underclothes.

SUITABILITY TO YOUR PERSONALITY

If you are a formal type of person; if you care overwhelmingly for a house that is never otherwise than precisely so; if you never glue or cut out or spread things about; in short, if disorder of any sort is distressing to you, then any of the examples of formally balanced design would be suitable to your personality. If, on the other hand, you sit on the center of your spine, "wear" a cigarette in the corner of your mouth, and dress in the last exaggeration of fashion,

expressed in the latest clash of color, then modern French or Viennese or American monolith is obviously yours—which, if separated from the conservative choice of neighbors by toy-village trees or other garden screening, will save both them and you.

Whichever type of house you choose, be sure that you are choosing each detail because it appeals to you, and not because you are a slave to Rule. In other words:

WHEN RULES HAMPER—DISCARD

Let us say you own a piece of property that has a flat plateau, and below it a second table-land. Here is an ideal site for an Italian house; the house on the upper terrace, walled or balustraded, and the garden spread below. But suppose that you are an out-and-out American, that you live in characteristically American style, and that Italian surroundings—even cypress-spired gardens—would "say nothing" to you. In that case an Italian villa is not for you; it would be idiotic to suppose that a misfit setting, no matter how beautiful it might in itself be, could ever produce perfection.

Far, far better build a low, rambling American house with these or those characteristics—whichever best suit the type of person you are. Build the house on the upper terrace with a fenced-in flower garden around it, and turn the lower terrace into a tennis court or a swimming pool—or both. Or, if the difference in height is not great, put the house on the lower level and make a garden with a plunge pool, if possible, reached easily by steps going up from the first and down from the second floor.

But, whatever you do—if you really want a house of charm—do not be hidebound and imagine you have to build the sort of house the obvious person would put on such a site. Unless you *are* an obvious person!

Or suppose, on the other hand, you love a French house but hate a French garden. Then don't have such a garden. Don't think of having it! If the landscape gardener says you

must, get another landscape gardener with more ingenuity and sense. With clever adaptation you can have anything you want—that is, almost anything—except deformity, or a red and yellow Spanish house in the heart of a New England town!

ARCHITECT'S DRAWING OF THE PLANS

When the site has been bought, the size of the house determined, and its style and material chosen, the architect will submit a plan of each floor and draw or paint a picture —called a rendering—of the house as it is going to be.

It must be confessed that this portrait is apt to be somewhat flattering, much as a fashion-plate drawing is inhumanly slenderized and lengthened; the drawing of a house, on the contrary, is lowered, the lines softened, and floral decoration artfully placed. A photograph (later) of the actual house will be harder, higher and sharper in outline. On the other hand, the straight, hard elevation drawings of the front and back and each side that are always included with the final floor plans (and are used by the contractor to build by) are drawn without perspective or the softening values of light and shade, and look much harder than the actual house ought to. Elevation, cross-sections, and especially drawings of full-sized details are quite unintelligible to the average client, who can only "see a picture," and to whom all working drawings are unmeaning.

Very important public buildings are always—and private houses are sometimes—modeled in plaster or wax or other materials by people who make these miniature models of houses as a profession. Such models are necessarily very expensive. But if you can draw straight lines with a ruler, or even fairly straight ones—in other words, if you are at all adept in the use of a pencil, paint-brush, glue and scissors, a little paper model drawn to one-eighth of an inch scale is not unreasonably hard to make, and very helpful when you cannot quite see how the house will look.

A GLANCE AT THE PRACTICAL SIDE OF BUILDING

Let us return to the architect, and take up considerations of cost. When you have determined the size the house must be, and have bought the land, and have decided upon the style of the house you prefer, the chances are—alas!—that your estimate of cost is only one-half, possibly only one-third, of what must be allowed for the size and style of house you have in mind.

If you say nothing about cost, and the architect neglects to mention this most necessary detail, the result is apt to be a site for sale, and an architect's bill for drawings disputed!

But in the usual situation you name the sum you expect to spend and the architect explains that the style or size you describe will cost double your price, whereupon the sum must be increased or cost of building reduced. In the end a compromise is usually arrived at. But if the architect is young or money-conscienceless, he designs a house regardless of the amount you named—and meant—taking it for granted that you will gladly pay for what you want. Maybe you will, maybe you won't, maybe you can't.

If an architect knows a man to be enormously rich, he may let his plans run over the amount at first discussed, in order to give him what he feels sure would be more satisfactory. Not because he wants to run up the price and thereby increase his own commission, but because, when he draws the plan, he sees the opportunity to create beauty or comfort or durability that—to one who can afford it—may be well worth the difference in the cost.

When he shows the drawings to the owner, he naturally explains what he has done. If the owner agrees, the details are included in the final drawings; if not, they are reduced in size or quality, or taken out. On the other hand, if the architect knows that the sum the owner specified is all that he can afford to pay, he must check his dreams of perfection, and try only to get the utmost beauty and comfort to be had for the sum available.

PLAY FAIR WITH THE ARCHITECT

Misleading one's architect is for this reason a mistake. The make-believe-poor, rich man, gets a substitute house, with which he is afterwards dissatisfied. The make-believe-rich, poor man, is ever afterwards dissatisfied likewise, because of the necessary cutting down of the plans that entranced him and that he was unable to have.

Misunderstandings of cost are not always the fault of the architect (nor of the builder). If a stranger going into an architect's office tells him he wants a French Renaissance house and gives him a list of twenty-odd rooms that must be large and high-ceilinged, with ten baths and other details that indicate no evidence of economy, and takes him out in a very expensive car to look at an important site, and says nothing whatever about the cost, a young unthinking architect, taking it for granted that a business man knows what such a project necessarily mounts to, makes a preliminary sketch and floor-plans for a house that will cost in the neighborhood of a hundred thousand dollars—probably more. He is quite as bewildered when told by the owner that half of that amount is the utmost sum permissible, as the owner is to hear that what he wants is not to be thought of for twice his intended outlay. A more experienced architect would have avoided such a misunderstanding, perhaps by starting a dialogue such as this:

Architect: "You know, of course, that a house of—let us see, twenty rooms, built of limestone, with enrichment of ornamentation, and with a slate roof, will run well past a hundred thousand for the building—apart from decorations of the interior. Is that all right?"

Client: "Not right at all!"

Architect: "What price had you in mind?"

Client: "Fifty thousand is the utmost that I will spend on the house, including a garage."

Architect: "Then you will have to build a very different type of house."

Client thereupon builds a stucco or wooden house, with rather simple interior, or else reduces the house in size—or gives up the project of building.

FIGURING THE APPROXIMATE COST

It is difficult, on the other hand, for an architect to estimate exactly. But he must be either irresponsible or inexperienced not to be able to come within a fair approximation; in fact, you can easily make a rough estimate by determining the cubic footage of the building, and multiplying it by the probable cost of its type of construction. In a location where labor is highest, and for completely fireproof construction, such as apartments and office buildings in New York City, one must allow from seventy to seventy-five cents a cubic foot. In the country, where building materials are local or easily available, the price for a simple frame house can be as low as forty cents—possibly even lower—a cubic foot. A house twenty-five feet wide by fifty feet long with a seven-foot cellar, nine-foot first floor, and eight-foot dormered second floor—allowing a foot each for cellar, first and second floors—would figure out about as follows: Height, 7 plus 9 plus 8 plus 3, equals 27, which, multiplied by 25 (width), equals 675, and this, multiplied by 50 (length), equals 33,750 cubic feet, which, at thirty-five cents a foot, equals $11,812.50. This would be the least amount possible, and, of course, is exclusive of paint—which is considered decoration and is usually extra. The most expensive construction would come to $23,625, and other specifications would come variously between.

It might be well to attempt some such calculation as this before deciding to build at all. Also, before consulting an architect, you should make a careful list of your personal requirements. Unless you do this you will forget to mention half of the details you "cannot live without," the architect will omit them from his preliminary plans, and you will be shocked by their additional cost.

RECKONING WITH EXTRAS

The additional costs because of "extras," which nearly every house-builder experiences, can be overcome in but one way: study the plans, visualize the details thoroughly before the contracts are let, and then make no changes. It is the endless adding of this item or that, that runs up the bills like boiling-over coffee.

"While we are about it, let us make the house two feet longer, let us have the windows six inches wider. Two feet *can't* cost much! Six inches are scarcely enough to bother about." And yet—two feet added to a frame house of average construction, forty feet long and two stories high, will cost about two thousand dollars more, counting only fifty cents a cubic foot, and three to four thousand for a house of more expensive construction. The original windows were probably to be of "stock" size; adding six inches is not merely a question of so many inches of glass and frame, but an alteration in manufacture which exacts that they be hand-made, one by one, instead of machine-made in quantity, and therefore obviously cheaper.

Remember also that everyone from the architect down to the workmen's helpers is apt to underestimate both time and amount of material, and the resulting cost. This, of course, is true of all of us, and in every situation in life. It *always* takes longer to do whatever we are doing than we think it is going to, unless it is part of a daily (and therefore timed) routine. This, therefore, is of utmost importance: either *build your house according to a definite contract, and make no changes,* or be prepared to pay more than the average person would expect or imagine. Remember that every shelf put up, every hook, rod, fixture, cupboard or coat of paint—every item of decoration, floor polish or linoleum laying, electric fixtures, special hardware, mantles, additional quarter-round of wood, whether added to cornice or to wall —is an *extra* if it was not itemized in the original contract.

It is the architect's duty to tell the client this or that extra

will cost so much more. Generally he does. But unless each extra is *written down, signed for and clipped to the contract* —as it should be—the client has not the slightest idea that the cost is boiling over until he has paid out the amount of the original estimate, and finds that there is anywhere from ten to fifty per cent. additional cost still due.

HOW TO KEEP WITHIN THE ESTIMATE

If you make no changes the builder cannot charge more than the amount specified in his signed contract. Personally I have known of but two owners who made no changes. The first accepted the architect's plans for the house, including its interior decoration, much of its furnishings and all of its domestic equipment, signed the bids of the contractor and the landscape architect, and then sailed for Europe and never even wrote a letter about the work. When he returned the entire place was completed, even to the unpacking of items of furniture which had been collected in Europe.

The other client stayed in the neighborhood, but made only one minor change, for which a clause in writing was added to the builder's contract. In both cases the final bills were necessarily identical with the amounts agreed upon in the contracts.

One of the reasons for extra costs is that many owners cannot visualize the house from a plan, so that when its walls are up (it always looks half its size in rough plaster) he insists upon enlarging this and changing that, without giving a thought to the hours of labor and items of material that are mounting and mounting. Persons to whom mere figures—so many by so many feet—mean nothing, should have the sizes explained to them by measuring rooms that they are at present living in; closets, bathrooms, and all other details should be gone into, especially for a house that is small. The architect, to whom a plan is far more distinct than a finished building, rarely if ever understands that a client, no matter how much he looks at the plans, may quite possibly visualize

almost nothing, and therefore begins to make changes after the walls are up!

However, let us go back to the beginning, and follow the procedure of building in detail. Before making one decision as to location, style, or size, the average property owner must first make his arrangements for financing the enterprise.

FINANCING THE BUILDING

To the inexperienced, the very word "mortgage" brings to mind the favorite plot of melodrama—the "old home" sold over the heads of the aging mother and father by the flint-hearted rich man who holds them in his power by means of the fatal mortgage.

To mortgage your home in order to buy a pleasure car or to take a trip abroad—unless the first is to further the family's bread-winning assets, such as a car for a physician, or the second is to make the necessary preparation for a career, such as that of an artist or architect—is to court the melodrama's danger in earnest. But to finance the building of one's home by means of a mortgage or building loan is to do something that is done by at least ninety-eight persons out of every hundred.

In fact, all business men—even those who can easily, if they choose, pay for the building many times over—prefer to finance the operation rather than tie up that amount of capital in a form that will make it inactive. And for the countless salaried business men and women who earn good incomes, but who have little or no capital, building a house to be paid for in instalments is far more practical than continuing to pay rent, since the renter has no prospect of betterment—ever.

In order to build, it is necessary to have a certain amount of ready cash to start with, the amount depending upon the prospects of the property, and upon whether you have a fixed permanent mortgage or a building loan. In the first case, you can borrow as much as fifty per cent. of the selling price

from any bank. This leaves the other fifty per cent. to be paid in cash at the outset, from your own savings. If you are going to buy an old house to improve, the bank may lend you as much as sixty or seventy per cent. of the cost, if the improvements are extensive and the bank considers that you have greatly enhanced the value of the property.

TWO TYPES OF MORTGAGE

A permanent mortgage is one that runs for a long period at an unchanging rate. When it finally comes due, the bank may be willing to renew it—if the value of your property has been kept up—but is sure to demand a reduction of the principal if the mortgage was for as much as half of its original value and the property has run down. This type of mortgage, if too large, is therefore obviously dangerous.

The other type of mortgage, known as an amortizing mortgage, and available through reputable building and loan associations, will let you have a loan amounting to sixty per cent.—sometimes even seventy or eighty per cent.—of the value of a well-built structure in a location of especially good promise. An amortizing mortgage of this kind is paid off gradually at stated intervals—exactly as payment is made for anything else on the instalment plan. You pay, usually, twelve per cent. a year on the amount of the mortgage. Six per cent. of this is interest on the money borrowed, and the other six per cent. is paid-back principal.

In other words, if you borrow ten thousand dollars, you pay twelve hundred dollars the first year; six hundred dollars in interest, which is rent of money, instead of ordinary rent of house, and six hundred is paid back on the mortgage. So that at the beginning of the second year you have a mortgage on your house of nine thousand four hundred dollars instead of ten thousand. The amount of the amortization varies from as little as two per cent., on business buildings, to as high as ten per cent. on dwellings and apartment buildings, but the average amount paid by "home builders" is six per cent.

Although it is usually best to own the house you live in, it might be well—in order to make sure you are wise in buying rather than renting—to do a sum in simple arithmetic, because situations vary and advantage is sometimes on the renting side. If, for instance, you are paying $1000 a year rent on a piece of property worth $20,000, you are paying only five per cent. on the actual capital invested, and the landlord, while receiving only five per cent. gross, is paying at least $600 a year in taxes and repairs. In other words, he is receiving only $400 net—or two per cent.—on his investment. In this case you would be idiotic to change places with him.

But if you are paying $1000 a year on a house worth $10,000 the case is different. While you would have to pay a higher rental to buy it, the rent would decrease slightly each year, and at the end of a set period you would own your house outright. And if you are paying $1000 a year rent on property worth $5000, the sooner you become its owner the better. In other words, the desirability of owning increases as the value of the investment decreases in proportion to the rental.

Suppose that you are paying $1200 rent on a $12,000 valuation, and that you have only $2000 saved as a building fund. A loan association, however, is willing to let you borrow $10,000 on the property. If you take that loan and buy the house, your rent is increased to $1500 the first year, and each year thereafter decreases slightly. Taking the sum of $10,000 that you borrow as an approximate figure (because it is the easiest sum to figure on), and supposing that the house and land will cost $12,000 complete, the table of the operation will be as follows:

	1st year	*2nd year*	*3rd year*	*4th year*	*5th year*	*6th year*
Interest	$ 600	$ 564	$ 528	$ 492	$ 456	$ 420
Amortization	600	600	600	600	600	600
Approximate taxes	275	275	275	275	275	275
Approximate repairs	25	50	75	75	75	75
	$1500	$1489	$1478	$1437	$1416	$1370

	7th year	*8th year*	*9th year*	*10th year*	*11th year*	*12th year*
Interest	$ 384	$ 348	$ 312	$ 276	$ 240	$ 204
Amortization	600	600	600	600	600	600
Approximate taxes	275	275	275	275	275	275
Approximate repairs	100	100	100	100	100	100
	$1359	$1353	$1287	$1251	$1215	$1179

	13th year	*14th year*	*15th year*	*16th year*	*17th year*
Interest	$ 168	$ 132	$ 96	$ 60	$ 24
Amortization	600	600	600	600	400
Approximate taxes	275	275	275	275	275
Approximate repairs	100	100	100	100	125
	$1143	$1107	$1071	$1035	$824

After the seventeenth year the expense of buying is ended, and the house is owned in full.

The amounts allowed for repairs in this case are rather low; but on the other hand, those of a small house, whose owner is capable of making minor ones himself, may not be even as high as noted. Repairs and interest are a little like a seesaw; as one goes up, the other comes down. A new house, if at all well built, should have no repairs of any account. As the interest decreases, the repairs grow larger, so that the one is somewhat offset by the other.

The foregoing table merely indicates what it would cost —plus barest fixed charges—to buy a $12,000 house on which you borrow $10,000. If you borrow less, your payments are less; or if you keep a permanent mortgage, as noted in the first instance, you pay six per cent. on the money borrowed without adding the six per cent. for paying off any part of it. Your interest on $10,000 is fixed at $600 a year. Or on a $10,000 house for which you pay $5000 in ready cash and $5000 in borrowed money, the interest on the loan is $300 a year. Your rent is represented at $600, however, because you should allow for the interest lost on the $5000 cash you put in.

A house costing $120,000 would multiply every figure by ten, while a little bungalow costing $1200 would divide by ten instead. If the amortization on $10,000 is ten per cent. instead of six, you pay $1000 "on instalment" and $600 for

interest, the first year. The second year you pay on $9000, and so on.

At all events the loan—whether large or small—is arranged by your real estate agent; or if you own the land, the bank will make the loan for you.

PLANNING FOR SOME DAY

There is another way to pay for your house gradually, without doing any "financing" at all—but only if the size of your family permits, and if the house you are building is larger than your minimum need. Of course, if your family consists of many members who cannot be packed into less space than you have allowed for in the finished building, borrowing on an amortizing mortgage is the best answer to your problem. Or if, for reasons of your own, you choose to keep a fixed mortgage of from thirty to forty per cent. of the value of the house on your building, that, as already noted, is a sound procedure. But if, on the other hand, you are a family of two—newly married, perhaps—no way of acquiring a home is as sound and as economical as that of *building by instalments.*

This means building the least amount of your house that you can manage to be half-way comfortable in, and completing it part by part as you save. In the bank-loan method, you get what you want to start with, and pay afterwards, little by little, plus interest—which at six per cent. on $10,000 totals $5304—or more than half again as much as the amount borrowed. In building part by part, these interest charges are saved, the house is cleared of debt sooner, but you have to wait for its completion instead of getting it at once.

Or suppose you do not wish to borrow any money. You have six thousand dollars and are going to build a six thousand dollar house instead of the ten thousand dollar one you want (or any other amount—the sum does not matter). It would be far better to build a first unit of your ultimate ideal

than to build at once a completed but inadequate house that is not at all what you really like, and that can never be made into anything different.

If you are going to adopt this course, you naturally explain your intention to your architect, so that he can make his design with this end in view. Unlimited varieties of plans and exterior beautifully adapt themselves to this sort of instalment building, but there are certain unelastic others that do not take kindly to piecemeal building, either without or within.

SOME HINTS ON THE PIECEMEAL PLAN

And yet the best way to approach this method of building is first to complete the plans of the eventual house, exactly as you hope some day to have it, and then to begin with the barest essentials. If you are going to have a coal range, it is doubly necessary to build the kitchen. On the other hand, if you are going to use oil or gas or electricity to cook with, the future pantry might serve as temporary kitchen. Or if you build the permanent kitchen with chimney for the range, the pantry of the future is perhaps used as a dining alcove, to be closed off later from the dining-room—which is now serving as the living-room. In this selection, be sure to lay the piping for the future pantry's sink.

Or possibly you build the front hall and stairs before completing the back; or perhaps your original entrance is a side or rear one, and back stairs serve to take you up to your present sleeping quarters, which will some day be the servant's wing.

Or perhaps you choose—and are able—to build the front hall and permanent stairway and your own bedroom with bath (or baths), closets, and sleeping porch complete. Perhaps you build the big living-room at once, in which you eat as well as live, and have a small temporary kitchenette that later is to become a lavatory and coat-room.

But however much you build, it must be divided ver-

tically—never horizontally—into sections. Each unit must be built from cellar to roof. In other words, *never* build a bungalow, intending later to add a second story which will necessitate tearing off the roof and building a new one. You can leave second-story space, if desired, in the shape of an unfinished attic; but ceiling height, windows and dormers should be put in at the beginning.

Wherever a room or other addition is to go, the connecting door frame must be set and temporarily plastered in, so that no future tearing out of walls need be resorted to; and of course all piping and wiring must be laid, and preparation for future connections boxed in on the outside, so that when new building is in progress, wires and pipes are all at hand without coming into the rooms you are living in.

There is one quite inevitable trick of the imagination that offsets impatience, and even to a great degree mitigates the makeshift of those who must look forward rather long to the completion of their some-day house—which is that the vision of the house is inevitably supplied by the blank doors, the beam-supported wall-space roughly plastered over, but ready to be broken through the moment the room or hall or loggia on the other side is ready and waiting.

Irregular styles of architecture lend their help somewhat better to unit-by-unit building than do those which are very regular.

The English house of the general Tudor type, or the simple farm-house type of building, is pliant, tractable and amiably yielding to the retrenchment or enlargement of its owner's needs. It is especially suitable for the plan that is to be completed in sections, since one complete building can be added to, by indefinite numbers of sister buildings. The block-shaped Georgian, or any type of Formal house, on the other hand, looks maimed if built only in part, and lends itself no better to afterthought additions.

About the only way to plan for a Formal house to be built piecemeal is to begin with a central block and add a wing first on one side and then later on the other. Or even

begin with a wing and a slice of the back, putting on the front next and the balancing wing last.

AGAIN WE RETURN TO THE ARCHITECT

Apart from making a suitable plan for unit building, financial arrangements are entirely outside of the province of the architect, although it is ethically his duty to see that you are given best value for what you spend on building and on whichever part of the decoration he designs. You must be sure, therefore, to fit into the total sums you have arranged for, a margin for extras, for furnishing, and for putting the grounds in order, and for the architect's fee, which is usually from six to ten per cent. of the total cost of the building that he has designed. This includes excavations, grading—only in so far as it is preparation as a foundation for the house—all building by carpenters, masons, brick-layers, plumbers, electricians, and the work of painters on the exterior and on the architectural decorations of the interior.

If the architect completes the structural decoration of the rooms—which he *should*—or designs the garden, which he does rarely, except for very important Italian gardens or Spanish patios which are fundamentally architectural, these items are also included in the total on which he gets ten per cent.

VARIATIONS OF COST

The least expensive material that can be used is *wood* (barring adobe in desert sections). The cheapest construction is that which is most like a box. Bay windows, dormers —all things that cut into or stand out from wall or roof surfaces—add to the cost of construction.

The house of greatest beauty at least expense is the "frame house" with either shingle or clapboard walls and shingle roof. The frame house includes every variety of Colonial that is not of brick, as well as endless varieties of "just houses"

and bungalows. Log cabins are cheap only when built in a forest of pine or spruce or other tall, straight-growing trees.

The frame house of highest type is built of brick or hollow tile covered with wood, and has a well-bred quality of being better than it pretends. The reverse of this construction is the house of brick veneer over an under-frame of wood. There is no actual objection to this, however, even though it lacks the ethical quality of the reverse just noted.

Woods vary in value from spruce and fir to cedar and oak for use on the exterior, and from fir and pine to oak and mahogany, walnut, cypress, maple, and pine for the interior. They vary, moreover, in quality from planks of rough and porous surface that splinter into hang-nails and drink paint or stain like a sponge—and so unevenly that the finished result looks woolly—to fine woods of firm and even surface that in time becomes as smoothly glazed as Chinese porcelain.

There should be no fear as to the durability of wood. It will last, at all events, for a dozen generations, which is longer than the house-builder or his children or grandchildren need worry about. It is true, wooden roof-shingles have to be replaced every twenty years, and wooden steps about every other spring; but they are exceptions. I would recommend that front steps be of brick or stone as a measure of economy, since wooden steps get down at heel with amazing facility. But wooden repairs are inexpensive when continuously attended to. A frame house will tumble to pieces if not looked after, but so will a neglected brick house, or even a stone one.

Stucco over hollow tile is of about the same cost as either combination of wood and brick. Stucco over wire lath fastened to wood-frame costs considerably less, and, properly done, is usually quite satisfactory. But if one can afford to pay the difference, hollow tile is much to be preferred, not only because it is fireproof but because it is practically an insurance against cracking, which is the flaw of stucco when applied to an unstable foundation.

The walls of nearly all Italian and Spanish houses, and of nearly all "apparently" open-timbered Normandy cottages

and English houses, as well as those of endless other varieties, are of stucco with roofs of tile (real or composition). Several modern renderings in stucco of Colonial, including Georgian, have been very successful—especially when the stucco surface is almost plaster-fine.

Brick is higher in cost than tile and stucco. The cost of brick increases according to quality, and according to whether the brick-yard is at a distance or near by.

The price of all building material is greatly increased if brought by freight; a fact easily understandable if one considers the weight, for instance, of even the very smallest brick house! Fortunately, the ordinary pinkish "common" brick is often far more beautiful in its porous surface, varying color, and faculty for acquiring the "softened look of age" because of its tendency when close to the ground to acquire a tinge of—let us call it patina. More expensive bricks are sometimes beautiful but quite as often they are merely hard and tight-grained and sharp-edged and as beautifying as blocks of iron.

As for the threatening Persian Invasion of black bricks, brown bricks, maroon bricks, and leanings toward patterns and shadings and blendings of peacock and yellow and rose and green—such ingredients do not make beautiful houses, but hideosities. Therefore, let us copy gardens and murals from the Persians, but leave their bricks alone!

Stone—The cost of stone is much higher than of brick—unless poor stone-work is taken in comparison with best brick-work. Smooth-finished stone is the most expensive material (next to marble) that there is. The rougher the stone, and the more local its nature, the less the cost. In localities where field-stone abounds, especially when it is found on the same property, a house of stone can be built at a very reasonable cost in the way known as rubble. (Do not confuse "rubble" with "cobble." Rubblework has great charm, whereas round, rain-washed stones jutting out from the walls like pans full of biscuits are an offense to good taste.)

The cost of stone naturally increases enormously in pro-

portion to its distance from the quarry and to the method of setting. Walls of evenly squared stones beautifully mortised mount up to many times the cost of those which are built of irregularly dressed field-stone, set into a wall of mortar like plums in a pudding.

Mountain graystone or granite that must be quarried is always expensive—but magnificently durable. The cost of steel-frame, hollow-tile and concrete construction, with stone facing and with stone or slate or tile roof, runs from about eighty cents a square foot—with wood-trim—to a dollar, even a dollar and a half or more, for a house of great elaboration of detail, such as certain Tudor country estates of marked magnificence.

WHAT PRICE TUDOR?

The English Tudor house of perfectly imitated old weathered stone, with rain-and-wind-polished carving, and patined metal, has been achieved in many examples by one of to-day's greatest architects—but at a PRICE! Very straightforward rough-dressed stone houses with wood-trim and first-class fireproof roof can be built as low as seventy cents a cubic foot. Brick for about sixty cents. These figures are merely approximate, because details of finish and of location greatly affect the cost.

Half-Timber—Real half-timber with brick nogging is very expensive—even as expensive as stone. "Real" open timber means that the studs and beams and supports are set up of solid wood (weathered oak usually) with their front faces left exposed and the spaces between filled in with brick, laid in various patterns.

Imitation half-timber houses are built of stucco, and then boards stained dark are put on top of the stucco in imitation of actual timber construction.

The most expensive building material is marble—very rarely chosen for a complete house, but often used for part, or all, of the trim of Georgian houses of brick. Trim includes

quoins—blocks of marble set into the brick corners, originally devised to interlock right-angled walls (as in any small wooden box), but now merely ornamental.

The less expensive brick house has doors and trim and quoins of wood, painted white.

The materials of the exterior necessarily influence the cost of the interior. A brick-and-marble Georgian house would naturally promise a lovely oval or double, or that most beautiful feature of a Colonial interior, the free-standing stair; spacious, high-ceilinged rooms with elaborate cornices and trim; paneled walls and marble—or hand-wrought wood—mantles. Stone and half-timber houses of Tudor or Elizabethan importance presuppose an important and richly carved staircase of pollard oak, and high wainscoted rooms and open-timbered ceiling. Real open-timbered ceilings show the actual floor beams overhead, requiring that they be smooth-finished beams instead of the rough-finished boards set edgewise of usual construction. Ceilings are often made of plaster in marvelous imitation of wood.

Italian and Spanish houses are expensive chiefly because of tile roofs, floors, and stair treads, and beautiful wrought-iron work. Roof tiles are pressed one by one over the knees of the workmen who make them. The trim, however, is lacking, doors are often absent, walls are left in the rough.

The least exacting style of house—barring the bungalow—is the simple one of shingles or clapboard with shingle roof and plain board trim inside, and with equally plain furnishing. The utterly primitive house of Tudor example with unpainted open beams, unpainted wood without and within, may easily be quite expensive, since timbers hand-hewn and planed are in this day quite the opposite of reasonable in price. The element of price, indeed, segregates the Tudor, Jacobean, Georgian and French château as suitable only for those whose purse is very deep; the tile-roofed Italian, Spanish, and all stone and brick houses as being of considerable outlay; and houses of wood, of whitewashed field stone, or of stucco with Spanish or Italian accents as being moder-

ate in cost. Houses of wood are cheapest. Every deviation from straight flat walls and straight back and front gable roof adds to cost.

THE OWNER AND THE CONTRACTOR

If you have no architect, you and the contractor build the house, and you assume the responsibility that belongs normally to the architect. But if you employ an architect you have no personal business relations with the contractor except through the architect.

When the architect's plans have been approved—at his own estimate—and detail drawings have been completed, you and your architect together decide upon the contractor. Sometimes a contractor is selected from the beginning and no "bids" are given out. But more often—especially for a house of any importance—duplicate blue-prints of plans and carbons of specifications are sent out by the architect to several contractors who bid on them, meaning that each names the price at which he is willing to sign a contract to build the house according to the plans and specifications that were sent to him.

The bids, which are received together at a certain hour on a certain day, are always contained in sealed envelopes, and these are opened by the architect in the presence of the owner. The advantages of each are then discussed and one of them is selected.

It is usually supposed that the lowest bidder secures the job, but this is not necessarily true. For instance, if a contractor sends in a bid that is much lower than any other—lower than the architect's own quite expert calculations make possible—this bidder's willingness to build at an obvious loss would warrant a close investigation of the matter. One reason might be, in the case of an unusually important job, a legitimate willingness on the part of the builder to stand a loss as a pure matter of advertising, or of keeping his organization going in slender times. He may believe that

his loss on this building will be repaid to him in reputation and future jobs. This reason cannot well be offered, however, in the case of an unimportant house. Another reason is that a builder may be so inexperienced or so incompetent as to make a serious miscalculation.

A third reason is one of which the architect of experience is always chary. A too-low bid from a builder of experience is sometimes an evidence of the unscrupulous contractor who underbids, with intent to freeze out his more conscientious competitors. This type of "squeezer" is usually one who gambles on being able to substitute inferior material and workmanship or to make the extras so numerous and so confusing in their unending repetition of "hours' labor," lumber, "hours' labor," nails, cement, "hours' labor," paint, "hours' labor," bricks, "hours' labor"—page after page—until no one, not even the architect, can make head or tail of it. It is impossible to keep tab on such a builder, unless the house is big enough to pay for a superintendent who never leaves the job and who makes itemized lists of materials and daily time-sheets of "hours' labor."

DETAILS OF AN ARCHITECT'S COSTS

Before leaving the subject of costs it might be well to explain a few details of cost to the architect which unaccustomed house-builders rarely take into consideration.

A bill that countless clients consider unfair is the bill for drawings which have to be discarded because the client changes his mind. When an architect makes plans and sketches and they are accepted—even after considerable alteration—the cost is included in the architect's regulation percentage on the finished building. *But* when the house is discarded for an entirely new design, or the project possibly is given up altogether, the architect necessarily sends in a bill for office cost in preparing these drawings.

To the inexperienced, this bill often seems enormous and unjust, because not one person in fifty has the least idea—or

stops to think—how much architectural drawings cost. In a business office, the average salary is moderate; many clerks occupy small space, and, as often as not, work by artificial light. An architect's draftsmen and renderers are all experts who get high salaries; each must have space for a big drafting table, and brilliant daylight is essential. At present-day rentals, the overhead of a drafting room is appalling. Paper and blue-printing alone are items that run into thousands of dollars a year in an office of average size.

There is another phase of cost—social wastage, we might call it—to which architects, more than men of other professions, not even excepting lawyers, are subjected. A client calls on a business man or lawyer and discusses business. When the discussion is over, the client leaves. But an architect is, for reasons that have never been explained, looked upon as an addition to the social life of the family. If an architect is agreeable, cultivated, intelligent, as architects are rather notably apt to be; and if he is young, the house-builder assumes that he is his (or more especially her) property.

Let us say, for example, that John Robinson, a young architect of talent, is given the Jones house to build. He is much pleased. Mrs. Jones is a charming woman. Mr. Jones is a likeable man. The house promises to be a good one; moreover, it will help carry office expenses, so that he can work on an important competition, which, should he win it, would "make" him. He will have plenty of time to complete his design for the competition by devoting five or six hours a day to it, until the contest closes. By working ten or at most twelve hours, he can easily (he thinks) take care of the Jones project and continue to superintend the jobs he has in hand—jobs that are small and time-taking. The Jones house is seemingly a gift from Heaven.

And then! Mrs. Jones comes to his office and talks and talks. He finds that she is rather vague, but inclined to like the idea of a frame Colonial house set in a field. So he makes tentative plans of very simple construction. Mrs. Jones is enthusiastic. Mr. Jones thinks they look all right, and asks

Robinson how much the house will cost. Robinson says it should cost approximately so much. Mr. Jones is pleased and everything is sunshine. Then, little by little, Mrs. Jones decides she wants a lot of changes, and is entirely indefinite as to what they shall be. She changes her mind about Colonial and thinks she prefers a French house. She has some French chairs and a set of Louis XIV bedroom furniture. The Colonial house is discarded and Robinson designs a double-winged Provençal house. She does not recognize it as "French," so he sketches a château type with high slate roof. She is delighted with the sketch, but seems to understand little or nothing of the plans. He draws sketches of interiors so that she can better understand.

She likes to watch him draw, praises his pencil facility, but seems as vague as ever in her acceptance or rejection of his plans. Gradually she assumes that young Robinson is a species of paid companion. She calls him up at all hours to come at once and decide about the house. When he arrives she talks ten minutes about it and hours about herself, her artistic tastes, her appreciation of the beautiful. What she won't talk about is how big each room must be, how many rooms she must have, or whether the first, second or third floor plan is satisfactory. Finally, she definitely decides on a stone Cotswold type of house, and, acting on a rather hazy outline of her requirements, the architect designs a house that he thinks would be suitable to the tastes and needs of the Jones family. He completes a set of plans and elevations, spending about six hours in sleep and the other eighteen trying to get the Jones house definitely decided upon, and struggling to finish his drawings for the competition. By this time Mrs. Jones has added innumerable rooms and increased sizes, besides changing from rather primitive wood construction to excessively expensive stone—which is not quarried within hundreds of miles of the Jones location—and Mr. Jones is absolutely aghast at the price. Remembering nothing but the roughly estimated total of the farm-house plan Mr. Jones is convinced that young Robinson is incompetent, if

not wilfully trying to force them to build an unnecessarily expensive house. At all events, negotiations are terminated, and Robinson sends in his bill for costs of rejected drawings, which is protested. Robinson sues; Mr. Jones pays, but Robinson has not only lost the Jones good-will, but he has also lost his chance in the competition because the Jones house took too much of his time.

This is an extreme example, but cases approaching it can be counted by the hundreds.

One last word from the point of view of the architect: Since the operation of building is essentially a partnership between yourself and him, it is not unreasonable to ask that you give at least a little thought to his side of the case.

WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR OR AGAINST YOUR ARCHITECT

How many times has a house-owner said to you: "The design of the house was entirely my own. I merely had an architect to work out the mechanical details." Which is very like saying: "I diagnosed appendicitis myself—the surgeon merely operated."

The worst thing you can do against your architect—something much worse than claiming credit for his design—is to discuss the plans for your house with every friend, neighbor and acquaintance, and change your mind about this detail or that with each opinion.

And what you can do for your architect is to discuss privately all points about which you and your family can't agree, thresh them out by yourselves, settle them, and then tell him. A still more important thing to do for him is to trust him, and to realize that unless you do, he can't look after your interests in the way you expect him to, and in the way he has every intention of doing. Moreover, do not put him in a false position by giving direct orders either to the contractors or to their workmen. The architect, who is alone responsible for the success of the building, must be in sole control of the job.

VI

THE HOUSE THAT YOU REMODEL

TO one who genuinely loves houses—both inside and out—there is no occupation so fascinating as restoring a once beautiful house that has been maimed, or discovering the possibilities in one of seemingly hopeless ugliness, or solving the problem of a honeycomb plan. Of course, the chief attraction of remodeling is not merely that the operation can, in many instances, be attempted by the owner, but that few new houses can compete with the appealing personality of an old one. Not only are its trees and bushes—if it have any!—inimitably becoming, but there are always telltale evidences of its long past—apparent in slightly softened edges of window-frames, chimneys, door-sills and the color of its stone or brick—that are missing in the blank regularities of the house that is still an unprinted page.

The problems of remodeling naturally vary from the simplest ones of making a few interior changes or an addition at the back, to complete remodeling—either in harmony with the original design or in accord with a new design that changes it into a different type of house. Between these two extremes—the first of which can be done quite easily by almost any one, and the second of which, if the house is at all important, should be attempted only by an expert—are hundreds of midway remodelings that can be done by almost any owner of cultivated taste assisted by a good builder.

If it is hard for you to see possibilities in imagination, then by all means take an architect with you when you go house-hunting; but if, on the other hand, you are of those who mentally reconstruct every not-pleasing house that you

look at, your difficulty is not likely to be in finding one worth redoing, but in deciding which to choose of the many that offer enticing possibilities. If you are looking at this place and at that, however, and have no idea which of several will take most kindly to becoming your home, it may perhaps be easier to make your choice if you realize that houses of definite style, especially formal ones, necessarily exact adherence to the conventions of their types. You can't tag runways and lean-tos and odd outbuildings to "mansions" of brick and stone or marble. But you can take a barn and a chicken-house and almost any odd farm-building, move them about and put them together in whichever grouping a perceiving eye directs, and achieve a pleasing irregularity that lends itself to delightful planting of other unconventionalities of a similar nature. Moreover, hundreds of insignificant, unpleasing or downright ugly houses can be turned into dwellings of charm—if their proportions are within reason—sometimes even if they are not.

But let us leave all considerations of outside beauty or ugliness for a later part of this chapter, and begin by assuming that if you are so much interested in a house that you are thinking of buying it, the probabilities are that the outside is attractive as it is. Therefore, let us choose a lovely old Colonial house; and in order to make our first example easy, let us say that its plan is of the hall-through-the-middle and rooms-on-either-side variety; that it looks unattractive because its wall-papers are in varieties of shabby brown, and that it seems uncomfortable because it has neither electric light nor plumbing—but let us add quickly that both are available. (We will take up their lack, later.) Even when considering the simplest plan, it is best to lay it out on paper. This is the first thing every architect does; one of the easiest things in the world to do—but one which very few prospective house-buyers ever think of or seem to know about.

You will need a few sheets of cross-barred paper and a rule or tape measure of some sort; if you buy one, get a

fifty-foot surveyor's tape that winds up on a covered spool, because it eliminates laying a lot of short rule-lengths end to end across the floor and adding them up in your mind—with occasional mistakes. With a long tape you merely get some one to hold the end at each point that you want to start from, and then the distance to which you pull it out, whatever it may be, is marked in feet and inches. With a two-foot rule you have to add six twos and seventeen; on a surveyor's tape you read "13 feet 5 inches." At all events you measure every wall length and mark it on the cross-barred paper. Regular engineers' or architects' paper, subdivided into eighths of an inch, gives you a standard scale; but any sort of cross-barred pad-paper will do, no matter what the size. In any case, you count one square as a foot, and mark the total feet of wall length as so many squares. Put down the exact length of each wall in each room, and the positions of windows and doors. In making this rough "layout" it is not necessary to bother about the thickness of walls except where blocked by a chimney or other obstruction.

It is necessary to measure all irregularities in shape and to put the rooms next to each other as they belong, so that with the plan of each floor (which is automatically accurate) in front of you, you can see the pattern of it as a whole, and know exactly how much space there is, and how hard—or how easy—it will be to open doors through, or to add or move partitions, as the need may be.

If it "lays itself out" nicely, it may be unnecessary to consult an architect. For instance, let us say that the plan we are considering is about like Figure 38. Then, on the first floor, let us say that we decide merely to knock out the wall between the front and back parlors and to add a sun-porch at the left side, making the most typical modern small-house first-floor plan known. A garage on one side possibly balances the sun-porch on the other—if not spoiling to the kitchen.

Or if there be a garden at the back, it might appeal

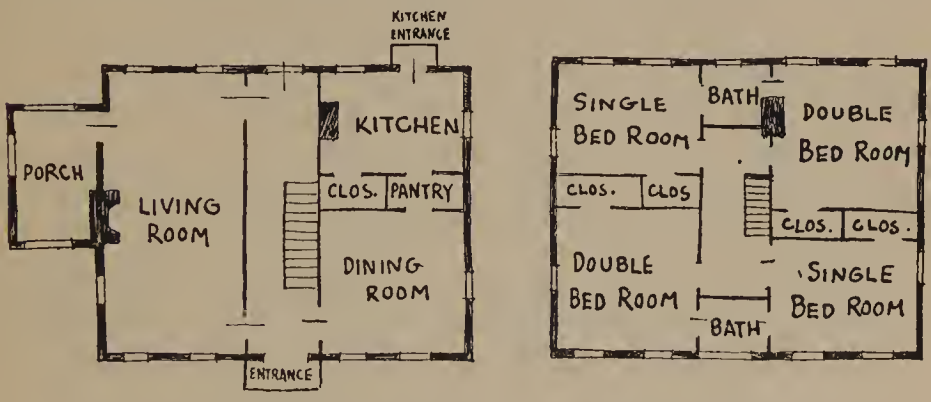
to you to change the kitchen and dining-room about; to omit the kitchen-screened porch at the right side, but to put a sun-porch or terrace or both across the back.

First Floor *Second Floor*

Fig. 38

TYPICAL PLAN OF HOUSE TO BE REMODELED

For such a simple change of interior as either Figure 39 or Figure 40, an architect would not be necessary; but per-



First Floor *Second Floor*

Fig. 39

A SIMPLE PLAN FOR REMODELING THE SAME HOUSE

haps if you make as much exterior change as that shown in Figure 41, with the addition of bay windows and two balancing outbuildings, it might be well to consult one—especially if you have to add dormers to the third floor for servants' rooms, or if you build two-story wings. At all events, with a straightforward plan of the sort that calls for a hall through the middle and rooms on either side, changes are seldom difficult to make.

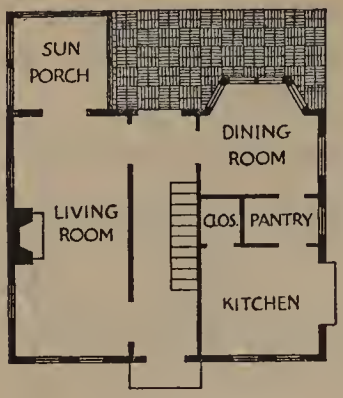


Fig. 40
A MORE AMBITIOUS PLAN

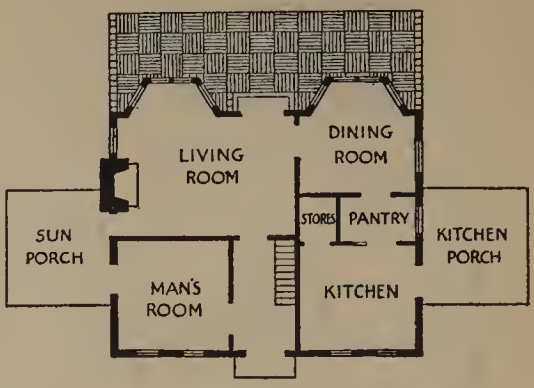


Fig. 41
A STILL MORE ELABORATE CHANGE

But a honeycomb plan is quite another story. For instance, a plan that is typical of Colonial New England is shown in Figure 42. This is a big house with twelve bedrooms but with uncomfortably adjusted space from the point of view of modern living. When these houses were built, mother and father occupied the central bedroom, and the children were put in cubicles all around and were unable to get out or come in without going through their parents' room. Unless you, who buy such a house, use the principal bedroom on the second floor as hall space, there is no way for the occupants of six rooms to get out except through room No. 1; and the occupant of No. 8 must pass through No. 7 as well as No. 1. Many houses of this plan have an attic in place of bedrooms 7 and 8. Others have only one floor, but nearly all have the small rooms around the dining-room. In a few examples, the only second-floor room reached by the stairs is No. 2, in which case No. 1 has no direct entrance. Of course, endless solutions are possible according to the needs of the owner. For example, let us say that you need three masters' rooms, all large, and three servants' rooms and a guest room. One change would be as in Figure 43.

This or any other plan is capable of being altered into dozens of patterns, though the working out of the inside

space in the center of the house is apt to be a cause of stumbling.

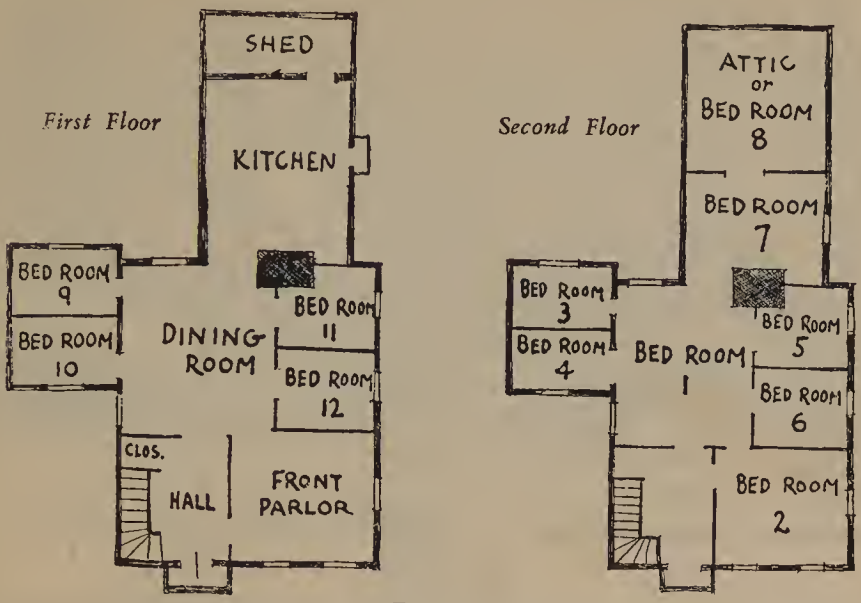


Fig. 42

TYPICAL COLONIAL HOUSE TO BE REMODELED

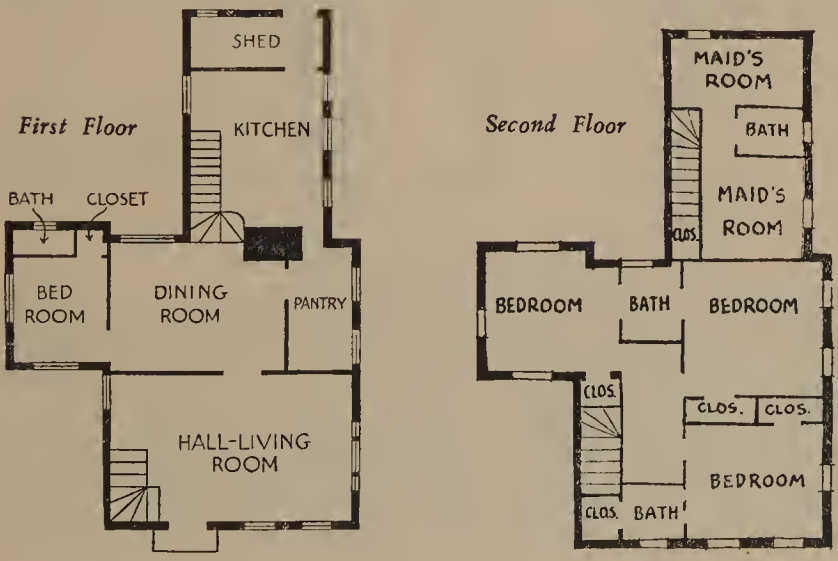


Fig. 43

ONE WAY TO MODERNIZE THE SAME COLONIAL HOUSE

These two plans are outlined merely because more typical of the average Colonial or Victorian house than the two which I am choosing to describe in detail, because I designed much of one and all of the other myself.

NUMBER ONE—MY OWN HOUSE

A snap-shot of the first is shown in Plate 8. As its picture shows, it was a small, rambling, one-storied, white-painted, green-shuttered house that sat in a field on top of a slight hill. It had a sign on it "FOR SALE," and every time

Fig. 44
ORIGINAL GROUND-FLOOR PLAN

we passed it we used to look at it and talk about it and say how enchanting it would be with a lot of flowers around it. But the inside seemed hopeless; a honeycomb plan, ceiling seven feet three inches. Every possibility of opening a wall through was blocked by unused chimneys, and it was too small for us—by five rooms. It had not a single pipe of plumbing, no open fireplaces, no garden, and its chief beauty was its charming lowness, which, should I buy it, I was prepared to destroy by raising the roof. To this proposition my son would not listen. He said if I made it higher I would ruin it. Moreover, the main part of the house was over a hundred years old, and the beams were fitted and pegged

HOUSE NUMBER ONE AS IT WAS

(See Plate 9 for House as It Now Is)

KITCHEN AS IT WAS

(See Plate 42 for Kitchen as It Is)

[PLATE 8]

HOUSE NUMBER ONE AS IT NOW IS

[PLATE 9]

and fourteen inches square; it would be vandalism to cut through construction like that. I might do what I liked, but he would not touch its roof.

Meanwhile I looked at other houses, but always came

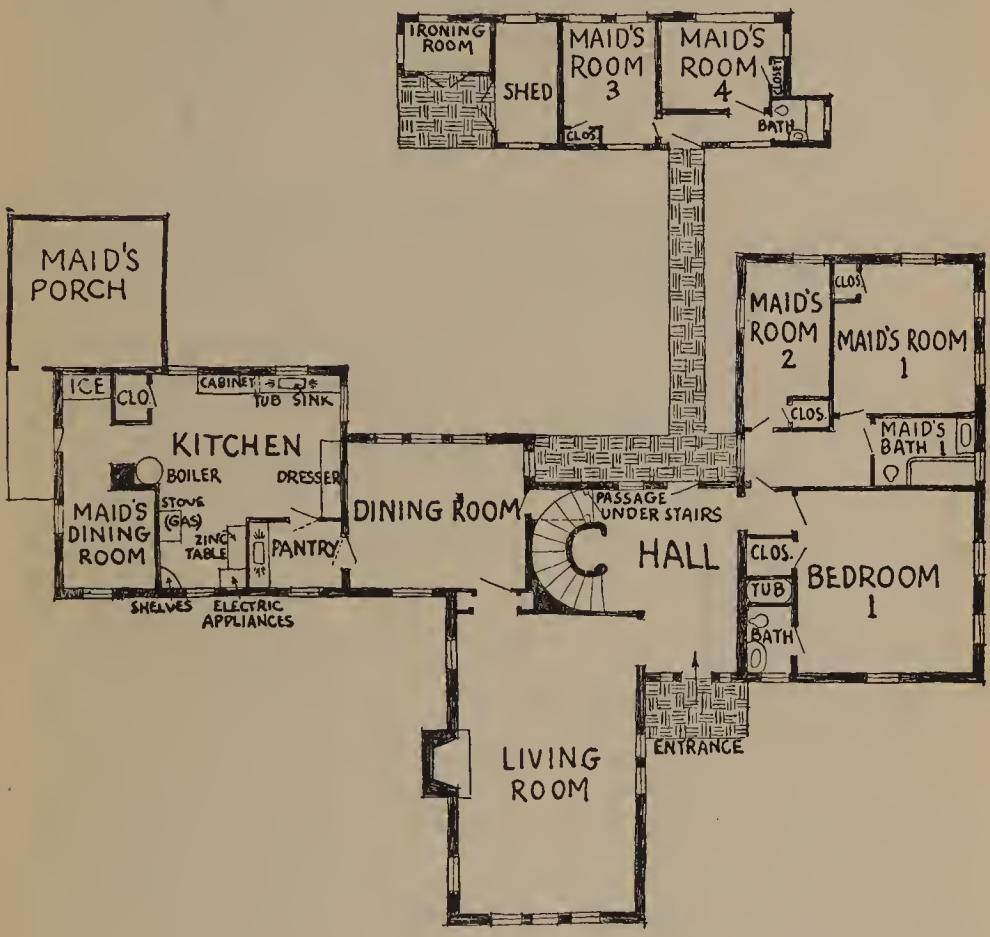


Fig. 45

FINAL GROUND-FLOOR PLAN

back to this one. Finally I took a sheet of cross-barred paper and laid out its plan, which is shown in Figure 44.

A kodak of the second floor will be found in Plate 10. This side of the house is not the one that had the heavy beams, but the photograph shows the side walls, which were over two feet high, so that adding four feet gave us plenty of head-room. I took some snap-shots, scribbled outlines of

heightened roofs, and showed my son the results of my measurings.

So then he solved the lower-floor plan by taking away the front door and putting the entrance at the side. He also designed the door and fitted in the circular stairway, attended

Fig. 46
NEW SECOND FLOOR

to the roof raising, knocked out the two old chimneys and built one new, and then left me to do the rest—which was to fit three bedrooms and two baths into the new upstairs space, make a few changes in the kitchen, riddle the walls with windows, furnish the interior, and plant the garden.

I also added an upstairs porch and captain's walk, and he added the "bungalow" (two outside rooms for maids), the tool shed, and the ironing room. The plan of the house is now the one shown in Figures 45 and 46.

The illustrations in this chapter show it as it is, both inside and out.

NUMBER TWO—THE HOUSE REBUILT FOR A NEIGHBOR

The second house illustrated in detail is one that I have just finished for a neighbor. As its floor space was only twenty-four feet by forty feet, into which it was necessary to pack four masters' bedrooms (the owner's of double size) and two baths; two servants' bedrooms and one bath; as well as living-room, dining-room, kitchen and "ample" closet

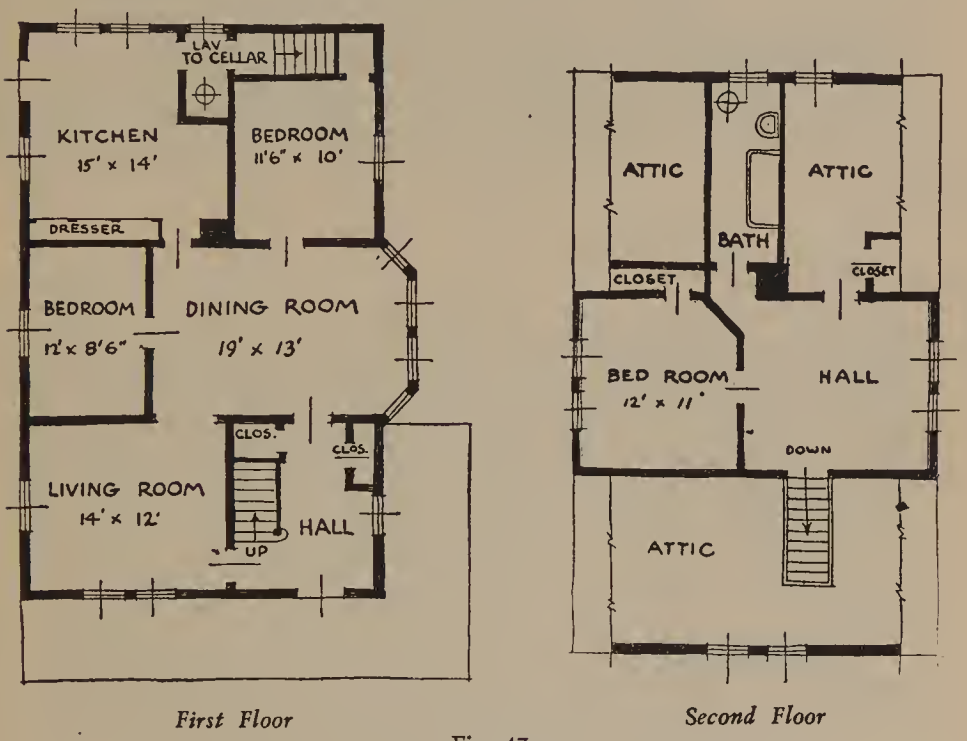


Fig. 47

ORIGINAL PLAN OF HOUSE NUMBER TWO

room, every inch had to be used to the utmost. The exterior of the house is shown in Plate 11. The original plan was the one shown in Figure 47.

Two of the rooms on the attic floor were attic-ceilinged, partially board-walled bedrooms, with the slope of the roof coming down within two feet of the floor. The bathroom walls were rough board partitions, and the space where one could stand upright went scarcely beyond the center.

A beautiful view of the water is on the right. The

loveliest part of this is seen from the rear right corner—occupied in the original plan by the blank wall of the cellar stairs! The living-room was on the street, and the dining-room, as in most New England plans, was surrounded by all the other rooms in the house, including two bedrooms.

Upstairs were three rooms, two attics, and a hall. One

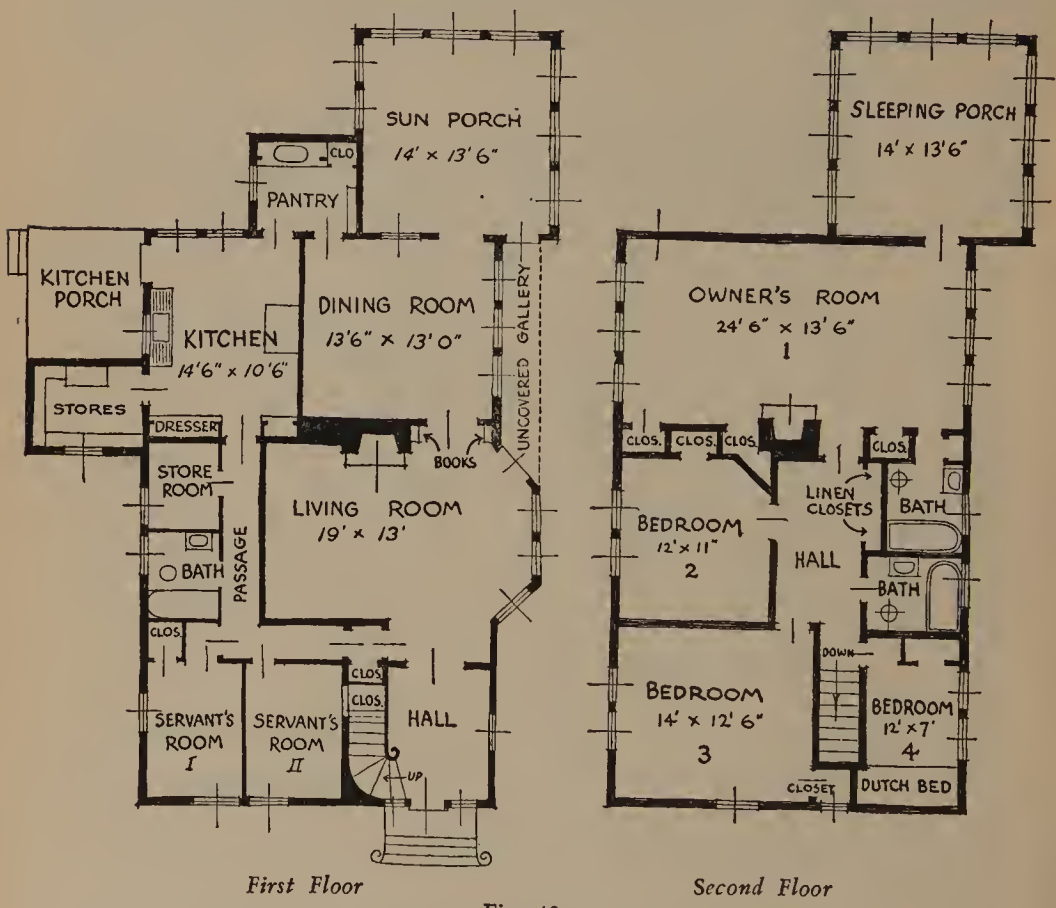


Fig. 48

PLAN OF HOUSE NUMBER TWO AS IT NOW IS

room—in the gable—and the hall were high, but the other two had steep, attic-pitch, windowless side walls. It was unwise to raise the ridge-pole or to touch the gables, not merely because these contained the only finished part of the second floor, but also because the house was too narrow to heighten the roof peak. So, in order to make the bedrooms comfortable as well as light, it was necessary to add dormers to

THE SECOND FLOOR AS IT WAS

THE SECOND FLOOR AS IT IS

[PLATE 10]

HOUSE NUMBER TWO AS IT WAS

HOUSE NUMBER TWO AS IT NOW IS

[PLATE 11]

THE HALL AS IT WAS

THE HALL AS IT IS

[PLATE 12]

LIVING ROOM AS IT WAS

LIVING ROOM AS IT IS

[PLATE 13]

gables; moreover, to carry the new dormers all the way to the corners in order to include bedroom No. 4. In this room the bed length had to be maneuvered by building it in, like a ship's bunk, and thrusting the foot of it four inches into the next-room closet space! The cut-out wood trimming happily disguises this recess, and the closet does not know the difference. As a matter of fact, this room is almost the star feature of the house. It is tiny, but completely comfortable, and deep drawers beneath the bed add to the bureau space enormously.

For this house I designed a new stair and front door, put in two open fireplaces and mantels, changed all the trim, added a sun-room (in pine), put a sleeping-room over it, and built on a pantry and kitchen porch and store-room; but the original construction of the house was little changed. Its present plan is shown in Figure 48.

The original dining-room, which was the biggest room, was naturally chosen for living-room, and the water view side was chosen for dining-room and sun-room. The kitchen was left unchanged. The only place possible for the servants' rooms was in the old parlor space. The necessity of getting from the kitchen to the front door made an elbow-hall imperative—an undesirable feature which, in this instance, I could not overcome. Even so, I think the space is pretty solidly packed and no essential of convenience is left out.

As already said, it is fairly safe to change an interior without consulting an architect, but if you are making changes on the outside—that is apt to be quite another story!

TWO SIMPLE WAYS TO STUDY HOUSES

In case you are one of those who share my own obsessing interest in rebuilding, it may be well to explain two pet methods of studying houses; they are not at all professional methods, but as they have been very useful to me, they might perhaps be useful, sometime, to you. For in-

stance, let us say that there is a lovely old place for sale with a rather ugly house on it, and that you would buy it if the house could be made less unattractive. Or let us say that you are considering improving the exterior of your own house—that you want to solve the problem yourself, and not turn it over to an architect. You know something is wrong with its outline, and you have long considered whether it would look better (or worse) were you to make this change, or that!

My pet method No. 1 is to take snap-shots of it, face on, both side faces, and back, then have a dozen prints made, and experiment by cutting away what might better come off, or by drawing on what might be changed or added. It is quite extraordinary how accurately the results can be seen, even with the crudest alteration of the photographs. You can see perfectly what a raised or lowered roof will do by cutting the picture off at the roof edge and either pushing it up or pulling it down. You can see how it will look with a new door (drawn and pasted on); with a gray Faber pencil—No. 57—you can make white paper look just about the color of a typical solio print, so that you can fill in blank gaps and make the façade seem whole. At all events, you can try cutting off, adding on, and remaking to your heart's content, and if you succeed in getting what you like, then measure the size of whatever is necessary, by measuring from known point to known point on the picture. In other words, instead of having to know the proper proportions by means of tables or slide-rule or other forms of mathematics, you can judge by eye, and when it looks right, then find out how big it must be made by seeing where the height or width comes on the building. Although foreshortened distance must be allowed for, with a few known measurements to go by, you can at least come close enough to decide what can—or can not—be done.

My pet method No. 2 is making a paper model. This is not merely of use to an architect in showing an owner who is unable to "see" the house plan from an elevation drawing,

but invaluable in straightening out perplexities if you are doing alterations yourself.

In remodeling the second house just described, I not only wanted to show the owner how it would look when finished, but I wanted to see how the roof with the flat-topped dormers between the gables was going to look. For this purpose I made a paper model. A little paper house is not difficult to make—on a scale of one-eighth of an inch to a foot. You merely draw each side very carefully as to measure, but roughly as you like in detail. Tint it with colored pencils, and cut the sides with wide margins to glue with. Bend its walls forward and back at each corner, and then glue on as many pieces of paper as necessary to make each slant of the roof. Naturally, you must allow for all irregularities—which are most easily added as separate boxes—and make separate patterns of the additions or changes you contemplate.

However, let us go back to the subject of exterior beautification, where we are faced, in the very beginning, with this practical question:

IS IT ALWAYS PRACTICAL TO BEAUTIFY AN UGLY HOUSE?

Taking ugliness as meaning structural defect, it must be confessed that operations involving structural alterations of the exterior are apt to be expensive, possibly too expensive for the average owner to attempt. Of course, if a dwelling of tasteless mediocrity can be changed into a gem of beauty, it is worth a good deal of effort—even sacrifice. But to make it undergo a lot of purely facial surgery without assurance of compensating return for the operation is scarcely worth the price.

An outstanding example of the hopeless kind of house that would best be left alone is the mongrel of assorted rounds and jogs and angles put together in a patchwork of styles—all of them bad. A smaller variety of this same no-breed species to be found in almost every village and town of

the United States is the lop-eared, Neapolitan striped, strung-bead-columned "wood-Lizzie" house, forerunner of the "tin-Lizzie" automobile in that it was factory-made in quantities and bought ready to set up! Its vintage began somewhere in the later eighties and continued until the bungalow took its place. Another bad subject for reconstruction is the "mansion" built of bad-color brick in a bulbously ornate design.

Fig. 49
TYPICAL VICTORIAN CLAPBOARD HOUSE

On the other hand, the seemingly ugly mid-Victorian clapboard house with heavily jig-sawed trimming is often quite easily transformed into a building of genuine beauty. If we cut off its lumbering veranda and its hack-sawed trimming, and restore its outline by pasting it on paper and coloring the cut places to look like the plain surface of the photograph, we shall see exactly how good—or bad—the structural form of the house may be. A mid-Victorian fault is apt to be the height of the windows in proportion to their width. Sometimes wrought-iron balconies, like those typical

of New Orleans, with flower-boxes or pots set behind the tops of the railings, will add apparent width by means of horizontal trimming, which helps to bring down the height. Or if the house is excellent except that the pulled-off porch shows too high foundations, an admirable treatment is a lovely flat-pilastered front door with pediment, with a descending double-curved stair in the manner of so many beautiful Southern Colonial houses, notably those of Charles-

Fig. 50
THE SAME VICTORIAN HOUSE REMODELED

ton. Or a simpler porch may be replaced two or three steps below the floor of the interior, and a moderate amount of grading done to raise the land. Again, a typical Victorian house like the one shown in Figure 49 can be changed into something modern and attractive, as shown in Figure 50.

It is rather difficult to show really hideous houses in illustrations, because if photographs were taken of the properties of others and used as examples of ugliness—that would never do! But I am impelled to say that no old jig-jaw or patchwork mongrel of the ugliest eighties can approach a few outstanding freaks that are building to-day.

One house that I have recently seen looks like a

two-headed frog under a Chinese coolie's hat. As I stood in front of it, a native told me: "That was widow Brown's house—used to be same as the rest of them round here—some fixin's!" A person who could take a harmless little house and turn it into such a monster ought to be forced by the state to take a course in fine arts, as a means of prevention against cruelty to civic pride.

Another example—elsewhere—was of an unnoticeable house of maroon brick and brown wood that was turned into a freak of vulgarity by a roof of wavy-lined, villainous, imitation thatch with eaves that curled around exactly like a trimming of gigantically fat inch-worms laid end to end.

Not that you are going to do anything like these, but the thought of them suggests an earnest warning against combinations of disagreeing materials—even against new ones that are at variance with the old. For instance, new composition shingles, which are unquestionably far more durable than wooden ones—and which are even exacted by the fire laws of certain townships, must be chosen with painstaking care as to texture as well as color, or the house will look like a beautiful woman wearing a flagrantly apparent wig. Substitution of anything in place of the wood shingling that is the natural head-covering of a Colonial clapboard house is a wig, and therefore, unless skilfully matched and adjusted, is a misfit.

There are some new asbestos shingles on the market, by the way, that have all the quality of the old hand-split ones. These are unequaled for beauty as well as use.

The addition of foreign-looking building material is easily fatal to beauty. Be careful even of new woodwork as being too self-assertively *new* when put next to the old. Above all, be careful of brand-new brick laid with too great skill and therefore suggestive of having been set by machine in frames of cast iron. Avoid all brick that is too hard and even—in other words, too perfect to fit into a house of other days when bricks were full of irregularities. The pinkish tone and soft appearance of common brick have twice the

charm (but not the lasting quality) of the smooth-glazed, finer-texture brick.

If it is impossible to buy old bricks and you are tearing down a chimney, you can have it done carefully and save the bricks to build at least the outside of a new one, or steps, or walks, or whatever you need bricks for.

BE SURE THAT THE STRUCTURE IS SOUND

Turning to even more essential details that should be considered before buying an old house to remodel, it would be well to make sure that the structure is reasonably sound. If the house is a very old one, you should have the advice of an expert whom you can trust. It makes no difference whether your expert is an architect or a contractor or a mason or a carpenter, but you should have advice from some one as to the *chances* of expensive repairs that may be necessary. Walk heavily across the floors—or even jump on them—to see whether they are solid or whether they threaten to break through. If the timbers are old, or look at all dilapidated, you would do well to thrust your own penknife into various parts of the woodwork before buying! Used with moderate force, a knife-point will not penetrate sound wood to more than scratch depth, but it will cut into rotted timber up to the hilt! Soft wood, no matter how sound, is always penetrable to a moderate degree, but that which is sound holds tight to a knife-blade. Rotted wood is no more tenacious than earth.

Sometimes an old house is bought solely for its beauty by some one of great means, and cost is an item of no importance to him. But more often than not, the principal object in buying an old house to remodel is to get a dwelling of comfortable size at an outlay that is less than to-day's cost of building a much smaller house, new. Successful remodeling, therefore, is that which achieves the best results with least destruction of the existing building—or with the fewest changes in items of cost. You must, however, be prepared for

contingencies that are unavoidable in all "making over" and leave quite a margin of safety between the contractor's approximate estimate and the probable amount of the final bill.

No conscientious builder will give you a contract price on an alteration that involves much rebuilding. He can't. If you insist upon a fixed contract in spite of his reluctance, he must—to save himself—either put the price at a higher figure than any upright man is willing to name or any owner willing to pay, or run the risk of loss. The chances are that the situation will turn out very much as he thinks it will, but he cannot tell within something of a gambling margin what the condition of the hidden structure of the house really is until he begins to tear down. Beams and joists may be sound or many of them may have to be replaced. A sagging floor-board may mean that one beam has rotted or it may mean that the entire structure will have to be braced. A few shingles removed to make room for new windows may reveal siding and even studs that are rotted through.

On the other hand, the structure may be splendidly sound and the work finished at less than the tentative estimate. (This last is unusual, but it has been known to occur.)

IN CASE YOU MUST COUNT YOUR DIMES AS WELL AS YOUR DOLLARS

Other questions that should not be left in doubt, at the time you agree to buy, are those of water, light, heat, and sewage. Many beautiful old houses in the country suggest such obviously luxurious beginnings that an enthusiastic buyer is sometimes apt to forget to ask about the quantity—also the drinking quality—of the water supply. Truthful answers to these questions may easily be negative. In thousands upon thousands of cases the "good well that the family always got water from" may prove upon analysis, or even upon questioning, to be in such condition that unless you are willing to face periodic droughts and the possibility of typhoid, you will have to meet the uncertain but always

considerable cost of sinking an Artesian well. Or if you are told that you are within the radius of the township's water system, do not take this as a satisfactory answer until you find out how near to you the township lays its piping.

How near also do electric light and telephone wires run! The poles of one will serve for the other, but make sure—unless your purse is deep—of the distance over which you must put your own poles up.

Heat is the next consideration: Shall you burn coal in range and furnace, or what other method of heating must be prepared for? The least expensive thing to do is to repair the hot-air furnace that is probably in the house. If a new heating and cooking system must be installed, go into this thoroughly and be sure to get definite estimates.

The only sewerage system known to the countryside at large is the cesspool, and if the house you buy has one, and it is in good order, there is no need—unless you choose—to change it. But by far the best country drainage system—unless drinking water is supplied from a well near by—is the septic tank. It costs less than a cesspool to install, and it never has to be emptied; moreover, if its dry-wells are put under the beds of the rose garden, you will have all the neighbors wondering how you have the "luck with roses" that you do!

Country people—for reasons known only to themselves—mistrust septic tanks completely. So don't let any of them persuade you to use any other method for the disposal of sewage, unless your land is solid undraining clay. In parts of New Jersey, and above all in Iowa, the advisability of installing one may have to be settled by an expert; but in average soil, especially if it be sandy, you need merely install one and—never think of it again.

HOW MUCH REMODELING MAY THE INEXPERIENCED ATTEMPT?

If the house you are doing is "just a house," you can certainly do as much of your interior remodeling as you

please, and quite possibly that of its exterior also. You can certainly add almost indefinitely out at the back, or push out the gable end, or build a somewhat diminished duplicate of the house at the side—if you choose a beautiful example and follow its scale.

For instance, if you have a simple Colonial square-box type of house, there would be little risk in carrying its roof out over a colonnade and adding a smaller replica of itself in the manner of the beautiful example illustrated in Plate 14. With a perfect model such as this to go by, you could not easily produce anything bad. And yet, if the house you have bought is truly a gem, it would be more prudent at least to ask an architect whether he approves the scale and proportion of your plans, since in a house of genuine beauty it is important that the intentions of its original architect be sympathetically understood and knowingly adhered to. It would be vandalism to lift it up or stretch it out, or to add an ill-fitting annex, or in any way to spoil the roof line.

Roof lines especially should be placarded with a warning to amateurs to "keep off," since nothing is more important to the beauty of a house than its roof detail, and nothing is more exacting of skill. The right heights, the right pitch, the right width of eave, the right cornice, the right roofing, and the perfect adjustment of one angle to another—these are not within the knowledge of the inexpert.

No one but an expert should, moreover, attempt to change a house of one type into another. You can, of course, take a shingle or clapboard structure, cover it with stucco, and make it Italian. But this also necessitates an Italian door, a flattened hip or hidden roof, and the removal of all evidences of American origin both without and within.

Primitive Colonial, such as the old Boardman house sketched in Figure 23, easily changes into casement-windowed Tudor, because that is what its ancestry really was. Or, as already said, if a house to begin with *is* thoroughly mongrel, it does not especially matter which of its possible progenitors is chosen as its origin of style. But, again, to repeat, if

a house—no matter what its style—have any beauty to preserve or to bring out don't change it into another sort of house and make it a mongrel! In other words, don't cover a typical old farm-house with stucco and make it bad Italian or Spanish. Let it remain a *good* farm-house.

And yet, since there are few—if any—old houses in America of other styles than Colonial, and if you personally dislike this style or any of its "nearly" variations, it is senseless, certainly, to remodel an undistinguished old house into what can at best be one of a pseudo-Colonial style merely because its parentage is more Colonial than anything else.

Because they are entirely unhampering—being "nothing" to start with—outbuildings such as sheds, barns, and chicken houses, are ideal to spend your imagination on, whether you put them into a costume that is English, French, Dutch, Swedish, or Italian. Beware, however, of adding details that belong in the tropics to a dwelling that was built in a northern climate, or vice versa. Perhaps it is not so much a matter of climate as of environment. An adobe bungalow looks quite perfect in its natural desert surroundings, but among neighbors of finer detail it looks like a man in rough ranch clothes sitting on a fragile Louis XIV bergère, with his rawhide boots resting on an Aubusson carpet.

THE COLOR OF THE EXTERIOR OF A HOUSE

The exterior painting of the smaller American houses has developed a slight degree of gaiety and a greater general uniformity in pleasing appearance. The utterly depressing suburban house of greenish chocolate, once known as mongrel because it was produced by all the left-over paints around the barn, and the ugly multiple-color effects, such as pumpkin-colored side-walls banded with red, a brown trim, and olive-green shutters and slate-gray roof, are at present rivaled by pretty bad examples of violent green shingle-staining and despoiling roofs. But most house-painting is happily limited to one color for the house, with a contrasting color

for the blinds; or with the side-wall, trim, blinds, and roof different but in close harmony.

The Colonial house in best taste, whether large or small, is still painted white with green shutters, or possibly cream with chalk-blue shutters. The shutters, which used almost invariably to be painted so dark a green as to be nearly black, are now, quite as often as not, mitis-green, apple-green, new leaf-green, or any light or bright green the owner fancies. The cream-colored or natural unpainted gray house, with blue shutters, has of late been known to display a blue roof; and it looks very gay and attractive, especially when the blue is not too dark and solid—*if* it does not destroy its neighborhood. Alone, surrounded with trees or in a group of houses of similar coloring, it is a relief, perhaps, from the uniformity of white and green.

An unusual and most enchanting color scheme for the exterior of a cottage at the seaside, or in a scrub-oak or other not-too-green woodland, is made by staining rough-shingled walls a warm tannish-pinkish-gray; the roof, darker gray; the trim, deep cream; and the solid (Dutch) shutters, *pink!* The pink must be as much like the glow of sunset as possible, or like pink luster. Needless to say, it must be grayed with more white than black. Start with vermilion, and add much gray. It sounds pretty bad, but a certain house painted like this is so lovely that it is almost worth going to Martha's Vineyard to see! I really mean it! And this in spite of the fact that I so much like houses painted white, with fairly light green shutters and neutral gray roof—if possible of shingles that look hand-split—that I have no second choice.

It is easy to understand that many houses were stained or painted dark—or left to weather—because it was economical. A house painted white must be continually washed off, and must be repainted every so often; since the only things worse than dirty white houses are dirty white collars and cuffs! That the frugal New Englanders painted their houses white is less evidence of their extravagance, however, than might be supposed. New England coastal districts are

sandy and very often wood-burning, so that a white house stays white longer there than otherwhere. White also permits touching up without danger of piebald effects, which are impossible to avoid in attempting to retouch a sun-faded color with new paint. Even if you seemingly match the old shade, the new is apt to fade differently and some fine morning shout "Look at me!"

Apart from the white and green Colonial houses—with preferably silver-gray roofs—those in best taste include houses of stone in all tones, or of brick, or of cream or gray-white, or of sand-colored stucco, either self-colored or with dark "open" timber. The Spanish craze has added increasing depths of yellow terra-cotta and even pink tints to stucco, besides vast expanses of brilliant red roof.

Whether you like these roofs or not is a matter of your personal opinion. In certain surroundings, and where they have quality of texture and blending of color, they can be beautiful, of course. But in the wrong environment and made of cheap material that looks like tar-paper, or even in hard color, shape, and surface, suggestive of machine-cut sections of drain-pipes or flat slabs of cast-iron, and of heavy turkey red, they look far from comfortable to the house that must support them, and are equally far from being beautifying to the neighborhood.

Roofs, by the way, do not weather in polka dots, but in streaks and veins. Instead of finding the weathered effect sought from varicolored tiles, all too often your eye is caught by one of these polka-dot roofs and you follow a tint or a shade unconsciously row after row, spot, spot, spot! It is much more eye-arresting than a spotty wall-paper, because furniture breaks the wall, whereas nothing interferes with the expanse of roof.

HOW ROOF SHADINGS SHOULD BE LAID

The directions given by the manufacturers of one of the best makes of tiles that reproduce the genuine discolora-

tions on weathered clay is to lay them as nearly as possible in imitation of the way a roof would naturally stain with the dripping of water. The ridge, which receives no drip from above, naturally dries first, and the eaves last. The lightest tiles should therefore be placed nearest the ridge, and those most deeply discolored at the eaves of the widest roof. The eaves of small gables should not be laid with tiles of deeper than medium discoloration.

Some of the composition roof materials—especially those of the cheaper grades—are unpleasingly hard and flat and mean-looking. These are, however, counterbalanced by many beautiful tiles of softness, thickness, and beauty of color, as well as by tiles of other materials, such as slate, stone, or copper. There are some unusually beautiful shingles made of lead. I have lately seen some composition shingles that, in addition to being fireproof, have the look and quality exactly of the old hand-riven shingles, which still make the most beautiful roof possible for a Colonial house.

If you are building, you will do well to look into the subject of manufactured roofings and insulation. Roofing is of vital importance to the beauty of a house; more vital than most people suppose—until too late! Insulation is of equally vital importance to coolness in summer, to heat in winter, and to fuel-saving.

One suggestion as to arrangement of plan: The usual method is to build a small group of rooms in the ex-barn and a smaller group of rooms in the ex-chicken house, and join the two with a long narrow hyphen containing the kitchen. If the family rooms all go into the barn, and the servants' rooms into the chicken house, this does very well. But otherwise a much better arrangement is to let dining-room and living-room occupy all of the hyphen, with windows on opposite sides. Otherwise the two ends are blockaded from each other by kitchen and pantry, and guests or family are obliged to go outdoors.

Or if you prefer that the ex-chicken house be used for

children or guests—so that they can be off by themselves—then be sure to add a connecting gallery on the court side, so that those who dwell in the smaller end can go over to the larger without going through the kitchen section or out into the grounds.

A FEW DETAILS THAT THE NOVICE MIGHT AS WELL BE WARNED AGAINST

First of all, building an addition is somewhat different from readjusting existing space. The difficulty in adding on a room is that, unless one end or side of a hall happens to be blank, the room next to which the addition is placed loses its utility, since it becomes a passageway between the addition and the house.

A small sitting-room, at the end of which is put a huge living-room, is a sitting-room no longer. But it can perfectly well become a "parlor" or reception room, or it can have a corridor taken off one side of it and the remnant of it (if there is any) can become a little book-room or writing-room. A bedroom that can be reached only by going through another is of no use at all—unless the other is turned into an upstairs sitting-room.

The difficulty is to keep the full value of the space you had without sacrificing it to that which you add, and thereby making much of it futile. You can, of course, add a dressing-room or bathroom or sleeping-porch beyond a bedroom, and a sun-porch beyond the living-room. But a big new living-room beyond a small old living-room spoils the old one so completely that it would in many cases be far wiser merely to double the old one's size.

CERTAIN TYPICAL PREJUDICES OF WORKMEN

It also might be helpful to the novice builder to be forewarned against certain prejudices of country builders. The first is the objection of many carpenters to allowing a house

to sit on the ground. Whether there is any truth in the fear that houses, like children, will "catch their death" unless kept off the damp grass, I don't know; but I do know from very long experience that the more conscientious the mason or the carpenter, the more surely will he stand a building on its tiptoes—on stilts—if he has his own way. The more surely, too, will he carry up his roof until it perches far above the eyebrows, like a woman's hat of the gay nineties.

Another characteristic of every *good* carpenter is a great appreciation of the solid and substantial, and a detestation of the flimsy no matter how clearly it may be labeled "quaint." A master carpenter will deliberately throw away your specification for match-board barn-doors with 4 x ¾" board battens, and show you a heavy, solid-paneled door that he has arranged to give you instead of "that no-account makeshift you had contracted for"; I have known them to do it for genuine architects just as well as for half-way ones like myself!

In the same way, the mason will take it for granted that you will gladly pay a little extra in order to add three or four feet of height to the foundation walls, or raise a lower wing so as to bring it level with the main building, or make some other "improving" change that utterly destroys the beauty and quaintness you had in mind.

If you are on the spot, it is easy enough to stop the mason's wall, start the roof where you want it, and flatten its angle and restrain its eaves. But if you are absent, you come back to see a wide-brimmed, high-crowned grain-elevator where you intended a Dutch-capped hutch, and a massive barn-door that would suffice to confine elephants instead of Bossy and Dobbin, who would stay contentedly in their stalls without any door at all.

Good masons will also worry themselves to death over the cheap-grade brick you contract for (and like), and do their best to "save on something" so as to surprise you with brick of better grade. In building a garden wall once I used

the commonest brick I could get, which was in my mason's obvious belief a streak of economy. He could not believe that I could like bad brick until he offered to substitute good brick for my old wrecks and I refused flatly. Even so, it was not until at a later period, when I offered to pay double the price of new pressed brick for a few hundred old ones to build a front walk, that he believed me—and at the same time no doubt believed me not quite right in the head.

Another detail which architects, no less than contractors, take very casually, but which drives a woman who hates wastage almost to distraction, is the unnecessary confusion in which the finishing of the job is done. Under ordinary circumstances every variety of workman is working at the same time, and each man's work is being held up or spoiled by others. The plumbers finish laying the pipes, and then go away leaving tubs and wash-basins and all other fixtures lying around everywhere that they don't belong; and they are much too heavy to move. Painters, as likely as not, spatter paint all over them. Then the plumber gets even and lays his hands all over the paint. The electricians gouge out the finished work of the carpenters, and all of them combine to throw everything heavy and handy out into the flower-beds that have been hopefully planted. And the owner, knowing that every item delayed or destroyed is just so much loss to him, gets more and more nervous.

One might suppose that the unceasing repetition of this experience would get on the nerves of the workmen, but apparently they like it.

HINTS FOR THE PROMOTION OF A TRANQUIL MIND WHILE BUILDING

If you would be tranquil throughout the process of building, remember to have electricians and carpenters entirely finished before the painters come on the job. Every one who has ever built can probably remember an instance where

the painting was finished beautifully, and then—hardware had to be fitted or electric lights attached, with the result that the area surrounding each object was smudged and finger-printed. To a woman nothing in the entire operation of building is so hard to bear. While the house is in a state of unfinished confusion, smudges and knocks and disorder are not in the least annoying. But after the painters have finished a wall or trim or floor, *then* to have it all ringed round with black, so that the painters have to retouch it all over, and paper-hangers have to put on patches, is a severe strain on one's sense of fairness. And worse still are smudges around drop-cords on calcimined ceilings that cannot be cleaned at all!

Whoever is in charge of the building should see that everything is finished *completely* by the time the painters and paper-hangers and floor-finishers come in. It is far better that the painter or paper-hanger should unscrew plates, or loosen electric fixtures and the hardware, than that the electricians should come in or the carpenters stay on after the painters, who are finishers.

If linoleum is used instead of tiles, it is unfortunately necessary that it be laid in the kitchen, laundry, pantry and bathrooms before the plumbers set the fixtures—which is not very good for any of it, but is especially bad for the finer soft-surface grades. If the floors are tile, of course, no harm is done. If they are covered with new linoleum, the only way to achieve tranquillity yourself—disregarding that of the plumbers—is to follow these workmen incessantly throughout the short proceedings of putting in the fixtures, and to supply them with old coverings of some sort for their shoes to rest on. It is not their fingers, but the edges of their heels and the soles of their shoes that dig into the linoleum and streak and cut it permanently, exactly as though with an indelible pencil sharp enough to cut. I know one plumber, a very real friend of mine, who, whenever he sets fixtures over linoleum for me—in mockery, no doubt—wraps his shoes and those of his helper in pieces of awning tied round

with string. Needless to say, I prefer the chances of mockery to streaks in the linoleum!

After the plumbers are gone, and the linoleum-layers (in town) or the carpenters (in the country) have cemented the linoleum, and all hardware has been put in, then the painters finish ceilings and walls and trim. After that the paper-hangers put on the wall-papers—if any are used—and then the painters or floor specialists finish the floors. If the floors are painted or varnished, the painters should lock the doors of each room as it is finished and let the varnish harden for at least one or two days. After this the house is ready for its furniture.

But the story does not quite end here. You will be very lucky indeed if the house suffers no destruction in the way of nicks, bangs, scratches, and smudges by the movers! High-grade professional "movers" are marvelous, and can take every blockading piece of furniture up stairways and through doorways that are seemingly about half the size of the object to be taken up or through, without leaving the slightest mark. But this is a feat beyond the skill of the average local truckman, a statement that can be certified by many a marred stair-wall and door-jamb.

And yet, to one who is a house-building addict, nothing is so fascinating as to get into precisely this turmoil again and again, because of an insatiable interest in seeing how each new adventure in building will turn out.

VII

IF YOU BUY READY-MADE

FOR each danger that follows in the wake of modern progress there invariably follows a device of safety. The danger that confronts the inexperienced house-buyer, with the resultant necessity for salesmanship-resistance, is the theme of this chapter.

No woman with the least common sense or halfway knowledge of suitability could think of buying a beaded evening dress to wear in the daytime on the street. Yet this is precisely what inexperienced buyers of houses do every day. Hundreds upon hundreds of sensible people buy a "pretty picture" entrance, electric ice-box, or colorfully tiled bathrooms, instead of the house, and its setting—which is exactly why such selling features are "featured." We shall get to this phase of the subject presently.

As the first and essential preparation for your own ultimate satisfaction and contentment in the house that you buy, therefore, you should—before going to look at any house at all—prepare two lists. Make them on separate sheets of paper or in a small note-book. The first should contain every item possible to think of that is necessary to your own and your family's comfort. The second list is entirely concerned with questions of construction and need not be consulted until the first list has passed your personal-requirements test.

And whatever you do, don't buy a house as thoughtlessly as you might buy a hat or a pair of shoes, since a house is far too important and permanent a responsibility, as well as an expenditure, to be chosen because its color or effect pleases at first sight. It should not be bought without carefully trying it on (by means of your note-book) and making

sure of its becomingness and fit. No matter how "sweet" a house seems, do not think of signing the contract that will make you its responsible owner until you have checked all the items that are necessary to your mode of life. If these are satisfactory, do not buy even then until you have checked your second list of building details.

For example, although your first list is much the same as that which a house-builder makes to show his architect, there is an immeasurable difference in this: If you are building, the object of your architect is to insure your permanent satisfaction in the house he is designing for you, and he will help you to the utmost of his professional knowledge to this end. Making a pro-architect list is merely an economical insurance against the possibility of a few forgotten items, since the architect will probably have thought of most of them for you.

But the agent on the premises is solely concerned with making a sale. Having made it, he cares no more whether you eventually like the house or hate it, than you care what ultimately happens to postage stamps you put on your letters. Making an anti-agent list is therefore a vitally self-protecting measure, because he is certainly not going to help you to remember items that are missing in the house he is trying to sell you. This is not a criticism of the agent; it is a mere statement of the positions of players in a game. In the game of house-building, or buying, the architect is your partner; but the sales-agent is your opponent. The point to remember is that buying a house from an agent is a game that must be played with your wits about you.

If you buy a house through your own real estate broker, whom you know, and know you can trust, that is again another matter; but even so, lists will do no harm.

LIST OF NECESSARY COMFORTS

To go back to the making of your first list, however: you should try to imagine everything you use each day,

sleeping, dressing, eating, sitting, resting, writing, reading, as well as on party-giving occasions. You must make a note of the things needed by the members of your family in following their characteristic pursuits. You must fit your servants as well as your family and yourself into your mental picture, and try to imagine them during the varying activities of their days.

Above everything, you must notice whether every working part of the house is practical. If you have children, where can they eat—play—sleep? How much room do they need for their toys and clothes, books and possessions? What other things must you find room for? Take measurements of everything. Measure the furniture you will have to place. Take the dimensions of the rooms you like in your present house, of closets you know, so that you will have a clear understanding of what sizes really mean.

Comparatively few people have the least idea of exactly how big a room 10 x 12, 15 x 17, or 20 x 24 feet may be. Few people standing in an unfurnished room can guess how much furniture it will hold. Take a tape-measure with you or—in any hardware store—buy a fifty-foot measure that rolls on a reel. Beginning with the upstairs (which is important), instead of the entrance hall (which is not), put down in your bedroom requirements not merely the number of beds you must have, but the size they must be. A room that is to have twin beds, with a night table between, will require a minimum wall space of 7½ feet over all; bed length is usually 7 feet. Twin beds close together with a night table on either side, 9 feet. A double bed is 4½ feet wide, a single bed 3 feet or 3 feet 3 inches wide. Make a note of where they will be placed.

Ninety-nine bedrooms out of a hundred have a long wall for the bed space opposite the windows, so that the only way you can sleep is with head to the wall and feet toward the light; meaning that, should you breakfast in bed or ever have to lie there in the daytime, a book or whatever you look at will be lighted on the back, while the page or object

facing you will be in total darkness. This arrangement is perhaps preferred by so many architects because it provides the least amount of draft from windows opened at night. Perhaps you are opposed to drafts? Or perhaps you like to sleep with your head on the window sill? At all events, if you very much care one way or the other, make a note of it.

Perhaps you care a great deal about an open fire in your bedroom—or perhaps you don't. If possible, there should be room for a sofa. If the closet space is large enough to be equipped with plenty of drawers as well as hangers, sofa space in a small room may be allowed for by omitting a bureau or chiffonier.

THE ALL-IMPORTANT QUESTION OF CLOSETS

On the other hand, if closet space is moderate, be sure to measure closet depth. Remember that a clothes pole is not practical in a closet 18 inches deep, because coats and dresses will be marred at the shoulders. Men are inclined to belittle a woman's insistence upon closets and then appropriate as many of them as they can. Men's boots and ulsters, and especially their coonskin coats, can take up as much room as the average small-house closet space allows for the whole family. If the linen closet seems small and narrow, measure it by your biggest stack of folded towels, table-cloths and sheets. A shelf deep enough to hold their width will do, if the shelves be long enough for your supply. Laying them lengthwise is better merely for looks.

If there is no attic, is there a trunk space? And a storage closet? Is there a kitchen-stores closet? Is the kitchen pot-closet and dresser ample? Is the ice-box—or ice-box space—big enough? We are taking it for granted that the kitchen is light and pleasantly livable. Pantry? How much room for china? Is there a housemaid's closet on each floor?

How many open fireplaces are there? Do not forget to notice this, unless you are one to whom a picture of "home" and a fire burning on the hearth are not the same!

Notice the shape of the living-room. Does its principal group of furniture naturally arrange itself in an undisturbed side of the room, or do doors open in such a way that the mantle and windows—near which you would naturally place your big sofa and most comfortable chairs—are in the direct passage between entrance and door to dining-room? Also notice by what means a servant can go from the kitchen end to the front door. Is the living-room big enough to deserve the name? Is the dining-room too small or too big in proportion? How many bridge tables can you put in the living-room (if this interests you)?

Besides questions of space and arrangement, make notes of the size and make of the kitchen range. Is there a hood over it to carry off the smell of cooking? What sort of heating system? What make and grade? How do the windows open and shut? Do they stick or rattle, or do they slide easily? Does the pantry door knock and rock and bump, or does it swing smoothly?

How many outlets for electric fixtures? Are there plenty? Count them. Notice most especially the light and convenience of the servants' quarters. Are their rooms pleasant? Is their bath of usable size? Is there a dining-room for them—and, in the country, a porch for them to sit on?

TESTS OF CONSTRUCTION

The foregoing are suggestions for notes on personal requirements. But of equal importance are the buying questions concerned with construction, such as: How thick are the foundations? There should be at least two bricks or an eight-inch thickness of concrete for a two or three-storied building, or twelve inches for one that is four or five-storied. If the cellar walls are built of concrete, are they smooth and dry, or full of pebble patches and damp? Is the floor dry? Are the outside foundation walls wavy or streaked or starting to crack or stain? Can you see stones in their surface, or horizontal board-marks from the forms they were cast in?

If the outside walls are stucco, are there signs of "map crack" or stains? If they are of stone, is the mortar the actual surface with a few stones in it? Are the leaders of copper or tin, or are there none at all? Are the roof valleys lined with copper, zinc, or only tin? If not tin, will the building company guarantee "copper" or even "zinc" in writing?

Then, indoors: Are plumbing fixtures porcelain or enameled iron? First grade or third? (This is not important except as an item of cost.) If they are likely to be upsetting to judgment because of bewildering color, at all events notice the size of the piping, and whether it is brass or iron painted over. If the bathrooms and kitchen are tiled, does the tiling fit snugly against the trim, or is there a quarter of an inch left for a roach promenade? Notice all joinings throughout the house. Are they beautifully fitted or do they come together with individual indifference? Is the lumber smooth, hard, high-grade, or does it look hang-nailed and likely to split?

At all events, armed with two detailed lists, you should now be quite ready for the game of house-buying and be able to hold your own even against Bildem & Sellem's agent on the premises, who will display any of the company's houses with all the skill of a conjurer taking rabbits and roses out of a hat before your bewildered eyes. That firms such as Bildem & Sellem or the Allforsho Construction Company have need for necromantic salesmanship is obvious. Third-grade value can be sold at first-grade prices only by rabbit-and-rosebush *leger-de-langue* of the most conscienceless character; and this in turn can be most readily paid for by profiteers whose returns soar far above the moderate profits of the conscientious building company which gives its customers 100 per cent. of the value that it claims to give.

So that, although the above paragraphs have done their best to warn you against too easily believing in the reality of magic roses and rabbits, you will do well also to cling tightly to the lists in your note-book and to carry the book with you; for this is a well tried method by which to see how the tricks are done and to avoid being taken in by them.

Another sales-resistance aid is to remember that just as many an old automobile has been sold because its body was newly enameled and its worn-out engine covered with silver paint, hundreds of houses equally lacking in essential worth are sold every week because of little "arty" effects or brain-paralyzing schemes of color.

To your list of items to be noted you might add one more: If you are tempted to buy, WHY are you tempted? Because there is a showcase window in the dining-room that is too darling for words, or a trick cupboard that turns out to be a door, or a sweet little stairway, or a romantic grille of wrought iron, or colored tiles and plumbing fixtures in the bathrooms which so capture your fancy that you do not even notice that quite possibly the tint or texture of the one is far from being in harmonious accord with the other? Was the actual impulse to buy because of an electric refrigerator free with the house? (Two or three or four hundred dollars put down to salesmanship account!) Was it, after all, the orgy of colors in the bathrooms that benumbed your good sense—to say nothing of your good taste? (Which last may not be true—since tiles and colored fixtures can be ravishing, but they are not likely to be in a made-to-sell house).

Another question important to answer: Is the painting genuinely beautiful finish or is it artful disguise? This is the real rose-tree delusion, since who among millions of house-buyers can possibly know how deep the shiny new surface quality goes below its made-to-sell appearance—until the outside wears off and the worthless inside sham falls to pieces like stucco and cardboard buildings of a gone-by exposition? The importance of getting an expert whose knowledge is salesmanship-proof to advise you, on a building made to sell, cannot be overemphasized.

CONSCIENTIOUS BUILDING COMPANIES

Even though there are more building companies of the Bildem & Sellem variety than there should be—so many that

warning against them could not possibly be omitted in a chapter such as this—on the other hand there are plenty of absolutely honest and conscientious building companies, who, by buying up a large block of land and putting up houses or apartments in quantity, are able (and willing) to build to the advantage of the buyers as well as of themselves.

A company of this type has no objection to your calling in whatever expert advice you choose; in fact, the more expert it is, the more they welcome it, whether it is that of a consulting architect, builder, or firm of accountants. A company of Bildem & Sellem type will not welcome expert examination (its unwillingness will be quite apparent if you are on the lookout for it), nor will its sales magician tranquilly agree to your proposal to "think it over." He will not be willing to let you go home, as you should, and compare your list of requirements with those you checked, and to compare the building details with those you know to be sound or standard. He will at once begin taking other things out of the hat; the increased value of the property; the fashionable, or the rich, or the influential people who have bought next door, and whose friends are going to buy the very house you are looking at, the instant your back is turned.

He will also produce from his hat an answer to every objection that you can possibly find. You are not quite satisfied with the doorless openings, nor with their frames; you do not like the hardware nor the trim very much, nor the balusters of the stairs. You do not, perhaps, know why. He will tell you that "good taste demands simplicity." An expert would answer that they are not simple. They are crude, and cheap, and in very bad style. All the work is of the lowest grade. There are no doors between any of the rooms because the price of doors can be saved by leaving them off. Ornamentation—in painted plaster—trims the mantles and simulates the timbered ceiling. If the ornament had been left off and the beams were real, it would be infinitely "simpler" and better.

ASSORTED IFS AND ANDS

On the other hand, if the building is pleasingly planned and seemingly well done; if you know enough about construction or can be advised by one who does; or if, above all, you know that the builders have a reputation for integrity, you are taking little risk in buying; apart from being persuaded by adept salesmen that finding room for your treasured secretary-desk and your comfortable long-pillowed sofa, your old dining-room sideboard, your personal six-foot-wide bed, or a playroom for the children or other essentials, is of no account.

When you go home and talk it over, you should make a double-columned account, write down on one side the assets, and on the other their lack. If the essentials of comfort are in the asset list, and the shortcomings are nonessential, the chances are that you will be contented if you buy. But be sure to remember that if it have incurable faults of discomfort, the prettiest home in the world is an abomination that will never be anything else.

One last word: Under normal circumstances, the remodeled house costs least, the house that you build costs more, the house ready-built costs more still, and the house bought on the instalment plan costs most.

It is obvious that a house built ready to sell *must* cost more than bare cost of land and labor, because it must pay a profit (and a good one) to the promoters who risked their money to build it and who must be reimbursed for their risk, their loss of interest, the cost of advertising, and the sales department—including the skilful gentleman with the magic hat. In other words, you *ought* to be able to build your own house for less (even plus the building loan and interest loss) than you can possibly buy it for from a company which built it to sell at a profit. And, quality for quality, you *can;* in fact, you *very much more than can*—if you know what you want and go straight ahead and build it according to *unchanged contract.*

Arthur C. Holden and Associates, Architects

Ferruccio Vitale, Landscape Architect

A LOVELY COLONIAL EXAMPLE

[PLATE 14]

William Lawrence Bottomley, Architect

THE HOSPITABLE AS WELL AS DECORATIVE QUALITY OF A GRAPE-VINE OVER A LOVELY DOOR

[PLATE 15]

The house bought on the instalment plan costs most in actual cash, but it is a boon to thousands upon thousands who by this method are enabled to own their homes, and who would otherwise be rent-payers all their lives.

Every normal person longs for a home, and no one more than the worker who boards, or rents, and lives among furnishings that are not his own. And to all such the "buy your own home" appeal is irresistible. Very, very often the price asked is reasonable, the house honest, and the site one that will appreciate in value. And to one who is cautious enough to ask for expert advice—every one knows *some one* who knows *something* of values—it is a very good thing to do. You can see the house actually as it is, and where it is, and you are not led into the changes and extras that those who build or do over invariably run into. So that even if it costs a little more than the house that is remodeled or built, it costs infinitely less than the permanent outgo of rent spent throughout a lifetime for the transient expenses of gone-by yesterdays with neither a floor board nor a shingle set up for still homeless to-morrows.

VIII

THE COOPERATIVE APARTMENT OR OTHER COMMUNAL DWELLING

ALL the sales-resistance advice in the last chapter is merely a fraction of that which applies to apartment-buying. In fact, becoming a "tenant owner" in any communal dwelling is beset with far greater danger than is possible to one who merely buys a house which does not prove as satisfactory as he thinks it is going to be, or who merely pays a higher price than it is quite worth.

In an apartment house where you are one of, let us say, twenty owners, you have a one-twentieth interest, or right, in whatever may arise; but in the average instance you have no personal control except through the Board of Governors—whom you help to elect, willingly or indifferently, as the case may be—and in their acts you are without prerogative of your own except to share fully in all liabilities.

For these reasons buying a cooperative apartment about which you know nothing—as to its construction, its management, and, above all, its financial solvency—should be labeled in huge red letters "T.N.T."

The financially sound, capably managed, honestly built and conservatively owned cooperative apartment house of the 100 per cent. plan is now being recommended even by conservative trustees; but not without being very sure that the rating of the house is A1, and not Z26.

Let us begin, therefore, with a "T.N.T." or "Z26" or whatever we may call the type of cooperative apartment that those of limited funds and inexpert knowledge should avoid even approaching—just as a mouse should avoid approaching the cheese in a trap. By taking a look, from a safe distance, at this "trap" kind of cooperative apartment, we may per-

haps learn in detail the characteristics whereby its reverse can be recognized. The one to avoid is put up by a building syndicate of unsavory reputation solely for its own profit. Let us say that it is promoted by Bildem & Sellem, the same firm that put up the block of new houses which illustrated the wrong house to buy, in the last chapter.

THE WRONG KIND OF COOPERATIVE BUILDING

A dangerous cooperative building is one that is put up as cheaply as possible; it stands without falling, and that is about all. Its financial basis is just about equally solid. Its outward appearance has a camouflage finish of stucco trim in the entrance hall, supplemented by the overbraided uniforms of the doorman and front elevator man. The financial statement is a supreme exposition of optimism and avoidance of facts that might foreshadow deficits. Its optimism is emphasized by our old friend, the agent of rabbits-and-roses skill, who sold houses in the last chapter. He now suggests that you briefly pass over "tiresome figures," since all you need to know is that apartment 4B will cost so much. Unless you know there must be one, and ask him how much it is, he may possibly not think to mention the maintenance payment at all. But when directly asked, he will say delightedly, "Only ten per cent.," but fail to tell you by what means it is to be kept at that.

Having made the cost entirely clear by "leaving out the merely technical details," he now begins his actual selling method by flourishing the list of magic names—of the great and near-great who are all going to become partners in the enterprise which you are privileged to join. Remember—and never forget—the difference between "going to buy" and "have bought," and even when the words are "have bought," verify them.

This list of owners or tentative owners is the first thing that the prospective buyer should investigate, because it is the chief selling factor through which at least fifteen of the

twenty owners are given sufficient confidence to buy. For instance, Mr. and Mrs. Rentings decide that rather than move every time their landlords put up the rent, they will buy an apartment of their own. In this mood they see a brand-new building with a cheerful white-lined brick façade, inviting casement windows, and a huge diagram on a pink or light green ground, showing a checker-board of rectangular spaces, more than a third of them filled with the big block-lettered word "SOLD." A notice at the bottom announces "Agent on Premises." The Rentings go in. The agent greets them cordially, and shows them an apartment. He distracts their attention with his well-known conjuring skill throughout their visit to the kitchen end, but lingers in the living-room or the principal bedrooms, or whichever happens to be the best room to put foremost, and produces his bait-list—a duplicate of the sign outside, except that many more spaces are filled than the few marked "SOLD."

He holds it exactly as he would the pack of cards from which you are to choose whichever one you please, and the Rentings are made to notice that "Mr. Notables has bought on the tenth floor, Mr. Eminent is closing to-day, the Toplofty-Smiths of Long Island have bought No. 4B, Mrs. Socially Prominent has chosen the fifth," and so on. The Rentings naturally think—as they are intended to—that if prominent people such as these are all investing their funds and making their homes in the building, certainly it should be safe for people like themselves to do the same. Knowing nothing about cooperative methods or maintenance, they merely notice that at about the rent they paid before their late landlord raised them, they are getting a brand-new and much more smartly run apartment, the rent for which—so they think—can never increase. Without advice from any one, they take a large part of their nest-egg of savings, buy the apartment, and move in.

Little by little, the Rentings discover many things. They cannot keep a cook because the kitchen is airless, and the dining-room, on the same court, gets all its smell and that of

other kitchens as well. The fireplace in the living-room is a fake in which they can burn no logs.

Moreover, they discover that their fellow-owners are not the personages they had supposed them to be. It seems that the Notables sold their apartment and bought a larger one elsewhere; the Eminents and Mrs. Prominent decided not to buy—though they had held options at the time the Rentings bought. The Smiths, who alone had bought and stayed, were no relatives of the Toplofty-Smiths of Long Island, as the agent "had been led to suppose," but were Fieldmice-Smiths from Fieldville Junction.

Nevertheless, all goes fairly well so long as the house remains brand-new. But gradually the camouflage of transient decoration wears through, and the skimped construction of the building becomes increasingly apparent. The steam pipes add leakage to their chronic habit of knocking, the shrinkage of unseasoned wood leaves cracks in nearly all door frames, the short-measurement tiles recede from the walls. The plumber becomes a frequent visitor, as well as other workmen, who bear witness to the money that went into the pockets of Messrs. Bildem & Sellem instead of into sound construction.

Nor are the flaws in the quality of building the only ones. The style of upkeep falls off; the management of the building, which was permanently assigned to a subsidiary company recommended by Bildem & Sellem, has taken away the original front-door man to improve the appearance of a newer building. In the Rentings' house, the men are changed every few weeks, and the once much-braided tail-coat uniforms are now of jumper grade. The halls are dirty, the building is gradually running down at heels.

And then the Rentings get a notice that the rate will have to be increased to 14 per cent. Six months later they get an assessment. The Rentings learn for the first time that some of the apartments were never sold. They were temporarily rented to help pay the upkeep, and are now vacant. There is, moreover, another assessment to pay for an amort-

ization of the second mortgage. For the first time the financial statement is made quite clear. The property is mortgaged to the utmost limit, and nothing has been put aside for amortization; there is not even a fund for depreciation and repair.

Realizing only too well that their investment was neither profitable nor sound, the Rentings decide to sell. But, the house being by this time obviously a patchwork building, with finances very close to ruin, the Rentings must either accept an offer of half the amount they paid or face continuous assessments for a building not worth being assessed on. All of which should certainly be a warning to the unwary against buying into an uninvestigated building.

AN EXAMPLE OF SOUND COOPERATIVE BUILDING

The foregoing example, of course, is purposely chosen as the worst possible to encounter; but it is by no means exaggerated to the point of impossibility. However, having presented its hazards, let me now give an example of sound cooperative building.

Superficially, the characteristics may seem much the same, especially since the wrong methods imitate the appearance of the good. But one difference, to start with, is that the financial plan in a properly drawn prospectus has been prepared by a responsible firm of accountants or lawyers, and if a buyer does not understand the meaning of maintenance and amortization and sinking fund, it is thoroughly and clearly explained. A complete list of wages to be paid is drawn up, and all allowances for heat, light, and repairs are estimated in such a way that comparison with costs in like buildings may easily be made. The building is put up, moreover, by a notable architect, and a builder whose standing is equally high. The names given of the owners are in no way other than they seem, and you are, moreover, assured by the reputations of those who sponsor the project, that your interests will be conscientiously looked after.

HOW COOPERATIVE APARTMENTS ARE FINANCED

The financial basis of a cooperative organization is very briefly this: A building company—of whatever it is composed—puts up the building and sells the apartments in the form of stock in the corporation. In other words, instead of buying an apartment for so many thousand dollars, you buy so many hundred shares of stock in the XXX Park Avenue Corporation. (The name is usually that of its address, but it can be anything agreed upon by the organizers.) For rather technical reasons this is considered the best way to incorporate such an enterprise, so that instead of receiving a deed for apartment No. 10A you receive a certificate of stock to the amount and value of the space occupied by apartment No. 10A, and a lease for apartment 10A, which is customarily allotted for a period of ninety-nine years. But, as it is clearer to speak of your apartment rather than of the shares of stock which represent it, let us put the stock out of mind until you are about to sign a contract, when —if you care to know—your lawyer can far better than I explain the reason why.

It is, however, important that you understand that every owner of a cooperative apartment assumes his share—based on the cost of his apartment—of certain fixed charges above the buying price that he pays. The proportion of the buying price to your share of the free and clear cost of both land and building varies in each corporation.

In a superconservative building the buying cost is high and the maintenance rate low, because the mortgage is very small and the interest to be paid on it not only less in amount but at a lower rate. For example, let us say that if there were no building loan or mortgage of any kind, the free and clear cost of the apartment would be fifty thousand dollars. In an ultra conservative building you would pay as much as thirty thousand dollars cash, and yearly interest on twenty thousand dollars of the mortgage, which is your share. If you pay as little as twenty thousand and your charges for

mortgage are for thirty, the situation is evidently one of hazard rather than of safety.

The amount of mortgage compared to the value of the building is very important, and one which a prospective buyer should understand. Moreover, he should find out the actual cost of the ground and building, and not accept the rose-and-rabbit agent's inflated valuation—again a danger of the wrong cooperative. In the properly presented prospectus these costs are so clearly stated that verification is a simple matter. In the wrong building, promoters' profits are covered over in pretended cost. If what is called the maintenance charge can be kept at 10 per cent., it should mean that you paid at least thirty—possibly thirty-two—thousand dollars for an apartment whose total value is fifty thousand dollars. But if the maintenance charge is 16 per cent., you should not have paid more than twenty-two thousand dollars on a fifty-thousand valuation.

In other words, your total yearly cost balances like this: If you pay $32,000 cash, maintenance charge at 10 per cent. would be $3,200 yearly; allowing 5 per cent. on your $32,000 investment, or $1,600 (the interest that you naturally have to give up), this, added to the maintenance charge, makes your actual yearly cost $4,800.

Or if you pay $22,000 for the apartment, 5 per cent. on this capital is $1,100, and the 16 per cent. maintenance rate is $3,600, which, plus the $1,100, makes your yearly share $4,780. This is less than the other way, but not as wise if there be not sufficient provision in the rate of maintenance for amortization of a mortgage that is too high to stand permanently. The amount of mortgage and method of paying it—or keeping it—varies according to the preference of the majority of the owners. Cooperative apartments are rarely if ever paid for in full. In those of the soundest conservatism about 60 per cent. is paid for, or the amount borrowed is gradually reduced to a level of safety.

Maintenance charges, therefore, include interest on the mortgage, yearly amortization of at least two per cent., taxes,

Firm of Kenneth M. Murchison, Architects

ENTRANCE HALL IN A NEW YORK APARTMENT

[PLATE 16]

MANTEL IN AUTHOR'S NEW YORK BEDROOM

[PLATE 17]

repairs, fire and employee insurance, heat, hall and basement light, wages of employees, uniforms, and the various items that are necessary in the housekeeping of such a building no less than in a private house. If the apartments were paid for entirely, there would not be any interest charges, but there would still be taxes and all running expenses.

These costs vary considerably according to plan and style of house. In a well appointed house, each elevator adds more than twenty-five hundred a year to the costs; very well appointed houses pay higher wages, employ a greater number of men, pay more for their uniforms, and buy more of them. On the other hand, a conscientiously constructed house has almost no repairs. The only means whereby a buyer can be assured of the quality of the building is by the reputation of the architect and builder, and the known integrity of the promoter.

PUTTING UP A COOPERATIVE BUILDING OF YOUR OWN

But if you want a superfine building at a price below that of its counterpart made to sell, there are a dozen reasons why you should consider building it yourself.

Exactly as in the house that you buy ready made, the apartment put up by a promoting company *must* contain, and quite justly, a profit as well as reimbursement to the promoters. Therefore, every now and then a certain number of would-be owners put up a building by themselves. This is the soundest, sanest and most satisfactory thing to do, not only as a means of getting best value for least cost, but as the means of getting an individual plan that is completely satisfying to your personal requirements of beauty and comfort.

If you have looked at a hundred or so New York apartments of supposedly high quality that rent or sell to represent the typical New York rental—"a thousand dollars a room a year"—it is inevitable that the hackneyed phrase, "Queen Anne in the front and Mary Ann in the

back," will continually din in your mind. In that state you enter an overtrimmed, indigestibly furnished street-entrance hall, and go into an ornate elevator more or less in keeping with the hall. A moment later you emerge either on a tiny enclosed landing containing a section of adobe wall and two iron doors, painted walnut, or else you find yourself on a sausage-meat stone-floored iron-staired corridor that looks like the bare back stairs of a hospital or factory. From either of these you are shown into the apartment. If it is, let us say, nine-roomed, there will be a fairly big living-room (but one inclined to turn its narrow side to the window), a semi-dark dining-room, and a quadruplet of bedrooms, each the exact rectangular counterpart of the other—also narrow end to windows. A long season of apartment hunting makes one wonder what they do with the wide sides! There is always one less bath than bedroom; this is so that bedroom No. 4 may be used as a library, or den—or what you will! If the house is very new and what in trade is called "de luxe," the window of one of the baths will be full-sized and all of the plumbing good. As you look at it, you perhaps wish the windows were on the long walls, and you realize that its likeness to every other apartment robs it of personality; but it is all perfectly satisfying until you are led blandly into the cramped gloom of a lightless kitchen and two dark little cell-like bedrooms.

HIGH COST FOR NO COMFORT

Not more than one apartment in twenty-five possesses more than two tiny servants' rooms. Not more than one in fifty has a servants' sitting-room to go with an apartment of apparent grandeur—judged from the front.

If you can pay a somewhat startling price, nothing is easier than finding apartments with good-sized front rooms, adequate closets, and first-class plumbing; but finding one with a light kitchen and servants' dining-room and four or even three bedrooms for them goes only with a front part

of enormous size and a rental that is, as Alice would have said, enormouser. There is one kitchen that I could name on a court about twenty feet from a wall. The advertisement had said it would be white-tiled. It was. It was also night-dark! There were the two ubiquitous and equally night-dark servants' rooms.

I said to the agent:

"Do you mean that you can rent an apartment such as this?"

He replied light-heartedly:

"Oh, I think this kitchen is as good as any other, for cooks to walk into and out of!"

I pass the building every now and then, and it looks occupied; but I always wonder on how many of its floors the cooks have just walked in—or out!

All of which is merely intended to illustrate the reason why I myself became one of a group of apartment builders, and why I urge you to do the same. After months of apartment hunting and of finding absolutely nothing either to rent or to buy that was possible both to pay for and to live in—one or the other could be found, but never the two together—I one day discussed my difficulties with a group of friends only to find that each of us seemed to be looking for the same thing. We each wanted an apartment suitable to certain requirements of living, and one in which the back should not be different from the front. Suddenly, then and there, we decided to build our own. We gathered all possible cooperative details, and found that the only risk we ran was that of not being able to sell the house out quickly and thus of being forced to carry the expense of unsold space. As it turned out, every apartment was sold before the steel-work was completed, and there has been a waiting list ever since.

We built exactly as an individual builds a single house. Our object was not to build cheaply and sell at a profit, but to make the best building possible to put up—and to live in. It can be duplicated in the same way, but in no other,

because no one is going to undertake a project of that sort for *profit* and make NONE. That is obvious.

THE SAFEST COOPERATIVE

Nothing, as a matter of fact, is easier than putting up your own building, if you are strong enough financially—either individually or by force of numbers—to carry it through. The method of procedure is this: You first of all find a suitable piece of land, and get an option on it. About 10 per cent. of the price has to be put up at once. This amount is risked only if you cannot definitely sell enough apartments to be able to see it through. Here is the one and only danger.

Let us say, however, that you and nine friends are agreed as to the size and type of apartments you want, and the sums you are willing to be responsible for. Ten people would pay ten different prices if each selected a different floor. Taking the ninth floor of a fifteen story building as the average, each floor decreases about 8 per cent. on the cost of the ninth floor as it goes lower, or increases about 8 per cent. as it goes up. (This, however, varies in every building and must be calculated by a real estate expert.)

Using the 8 per cent. floor rate merely as an example, the future owner of the fifteenth floor would add 48 per cent. to the cost of the ninth, and the owner of the first floor would subtract a similar or larger percentage. As already explained, the price varies according to the distance of the apartment from the ground, the outlook, and other considerations; but no matter how steep or how slight the line of increase, the top floor is to-day the most expensive.

A few years ago extra servants' rooms used to be built on the roof, and a penthouse was a remnant, as it were, of the era of moderate cost. Penthouses to-day sell, space for space, at from a quarter to a third more than that of any other space in the building.

Having found your group and your site, the next thing

is to decide upon your architect. Or perhaps you decide upon your architect before doing anything else (we did), because he can give you an idea of the size and shape of lot best suited to the space you need. He can give you a fairly accurate idea of the building cost, and even of how much the different apartments will probably be. He also knows what land in this location or that is selling for. But he cannot draw plans until he knows the size and shape of the plot and surroundings.

When you have found the land, the architect should approve of it before you take an option. He then draws the plans. To draw a stack of apartments suitable to the tastes and requirements of ten different people is difficult, but by no means impossible; so let us say that in a short while his drawings are approved.

You then take up your option and buy the land. You talk about your lovely apartment that is going to cost so much, describe its location, and show its plan. If what you claim for it is true, one person invariably tells another, and that other—or another one still—comes and buys one, and the remaining apartments sell like hot cakes. There should be no difficulty whatever in selling them IF the plans are really inviting in arrangement and comfort, and IF the location is good and the financial responsibility of the original committee is assuring.

A FEW DETAILS MORE

There are two plans of cooperative ownership, the "100 per cent." and the "50 per cent." In the 100 per cent. plan, every apartment in the building is owned outright and there is none for rent. In the 50 per cent. plan, half of the apartments are purposely bought in addition to their own by the owners jointly as a means of income. Whether you think this is a good thing to do, depends upon whether you like an element of chance or not. In this plan, the rentals of half of the apartments go towards paying the expenses of the

owned half. When all the apartments are advantageously rented, it works very well—so well that in certain cooperatively built and owned apartment houses, owners get their own apartments for no rent at all. This is possible, however, only in the rather rare situation of those who built long ago, when the cost both of land and of construction was much less than to-day; and this situation for those fortunate ones will last as long as to-day's rents remain exorbitant. Should rents and costs go down, they would lose instead. If the building goes too far out of date, or its location out of fashion, and the apartments in a 50 per cent. plan cease to rent, the owners will naturally have to pay the upkeep for whatever unrented space there may be. So that while there is a chance of no rental at all, there is at the same time a chance for high assessment for vacancies, plus expenses for upkeep and decoration of apartments to lease, and agents' fees.

In some cooperative agreements, the promoter of the building company is responsible for any losses accruing through failure to sell the total amount of stock to the tenant-owners. In others this loss devolves upon the owners. It is of utmost importance to find out which is in force in any building you are thinking of buying into. When you build your own, this loss, divided among yourselves, is, as already said, the one uncertainty of owner-builders. But after the apartments are sold, if one is vacated, the responsibility remains with the owner exactly as responsibility for a dwelling-house remains with the owner or his heirs, and not upon his neighbors.

Apartment owners are necessarily more closely affected by the character of the other owners in their building than are property owners on a street, but there should be no danger of financial loss.

There is properly a clause of safety in every cooperative agreement; if an owner fail to pay the maintenance charges, the apartment may be sold by the Board of Directors (owners elected to office by their fellow owners), the arrears paid, and the balance turned over to the late owner—or his estate.

THE COMMUNAL COUNTRY DWELLING

Another type of cooperative is the communal dwelling—really a spread-out country apartment. It is capable of much greater latitude in outline and plan than a city apartment that must be built within the limits of 80 x 100 feet—more or less. The country cooperative is concerned with conserving upkeep costs in the way of heating and building. Kenneth M. Murchison, one of the leading New York architects, developed this project a year or two ago in a design that was very interesting; it was suggestive of the Pueblo Indian communal dwellings merely in that the roof of each floor made a terrace for the floor above. It was attractively suggestive also of the hanging gardens of Babylon! There were divisions of garden space, and a community sports building, with bowling alleys, squash court, and winter swimming pool and tennis courts. A scheme such as this, built of four or six units, with the sports building in the center and connected with each by galleries, would be rather fascinating and quite feasible.

In any event, cooperative ownership, which is now the outstanding characteristic of house-ownership in New York, is capable of indefinite development.

IX

INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE

WHAT is loosely—and quite unintelligibly—termed "interior decoration" is actually divided into three distinct provinces: Interior Architecture, Decoration, and Furnishing.

Interior architecture, which includes *all embellishment that is structural,* is an inalienable province of the architect—if there be an architect! Decoration in the form of *permanently applied color* belongs equally to architect or decorator. But *all decoration that is movable,* such as the hanging of material or the placing of furniture that is not built in, is in the province of the decorator—if there be a decorator!

When an architect of highest reputation builds a two or three hundred thousand dollar house, there is never any question as to his right to complete the structural decoration. But in the house of ordinary size, built by an architect of unestablished reputation, the point of separation between the territory of the architect and that of the interior decorator is to many well-meaning but uninformed owners not clearly defined. It is true that certain architects have neither interest in nor taste for interior detail. But even these complete the doors and windows, with their trim, as well as ceilings, floors, and stairways.

Quite possibly an architect himself suggests that a certain French or English room be bought from a certain firm of decorators who specialize in the importation of antique interiors. In this case he may perhaps leave the room—or rooms—floorless, ceilingless, and with walls rough-plastered. Usually, however, he instals the interior himself. That every architect should be expected to complete his own creation is too obvious for question, nor is there any question ninety-

James W. O'Connor, Architect

A PERFECT COLONIAL INTERIOR: THE PANELING OF THE DINING-ROOM HAS ALSO UNUSUAL CHARM

[PLATE 18]

Edward Shepard Hewitt, Architect

THE INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE OF THIS ADMIRABLE GEORGIAN EXAMPLE INCLUDES BOOKCASES, PILASTERS, MANTEL AND CORNICE

[PLATE 19]

nine times out of a hundred. But there is the hundredth occasion when an unwitting owner hands over the architecture of the interior to a decorator to complete.

If, for any one of many reasons, an owner would like a certain decorator to do a certain room, he should tell the architect at the time of his first talking of the plans. Nothing could be a greater infringement of the rights of an architect than to wait until the house is half-way up and then announce to him that Miss Drapery is to put pine walls in the living room and an old wainscot in the hall, and set the mantel and a series of painted panels in the drawing-room. Such a breach of ethics is exactly the same as saying to a doctor: "Dr. Brown is coming to-morrow to take over the case!" There are persons who know no better than to do just this; they are the same persons who would send for a decorator before her turn has come. And her turn properly comes when structural decoration is completed, never before, except by the architect's own agreement.

If an owner sees a set of panels or any other detail of interior embellishment that he would like to put into his house, the proper procedure is to take his architect to look at it. If the architect finds it suitable, it is bought, and he prepares his walls to fit it. Or if it is for the hall, he builds a stair to suit it. If he does not like it, and the owner insists on buying it, the architect must, of course, make for it the best setting that he can. But it is just for the avoidance of such disagreement that it is important in the first place that the owner choose an architect whose taste he likes. If, in his opinion, the architect has no taste, then under no circumstances should the house be given him to build. If, on the other hand, the owner admires his architect's taste and respects his knowledge, then he should do him the justice to believe him when he declares the old paneled room is bad either in design or in execution, or else unsuitable to the style or size of the house.

It is not necessarily certain, but the chances are rather strongly in favor of the average architect's knowledge as

against that of the average decorator. It is willingly conceded that really good decorators have much knowledge, and a few have supreme taste; but where there is one of these last there are hundreds who know nothing whatsoever beyond a patter of phrases like that of every other salesman the world over. It is also true that there are architects who have little taste and no great amount of knowledge; but they are greatly in the minority compared with the many who grace with their knowledge and their talent the most beautiful profession in the world.

DETAILS OF THE INTERIOR THAT AN ARCHITECT COMPLETES

In the house or apartment that is built-for-sale, interior architecture necessarily consists of the plainest possible trim, so that it may be added to or torn off by the buyer or his decorator; the walls are plain, smooth-finished plaster, which can be made rough as the surf of the ocean by the application of plastic paint, or covered with wood or marble or whatever else the buyer prefers. Such a house, at this stage, has an unfurred ceiling; a fireplace opening without mantel, facing, or hearth; base-plugs finished, but electric wires in side walls and ceiling outlets protruding through rough-edged holes. The kitchen and pantry are completed, with dressers and with plastered or tiled walls, and the wood or cement floors are ready for linoleum or other covering. It is not practical to complete the interior further than this, since the taste of the buyer is unknown.

If you who buy such a house ready-made are not in any way a client of the architect who built it, you either decorate it and furnish it yourself or you put it in the hands of a decorator. Or if you do over a house of your own, you do the same. But if an architect is building—or remodeling—your house, he should always complete the stairs, doors, windows and their trim, columns, pilasters, cornices, chair-rails, wainscots, paneling; all reveals, whether arched or straight; niches and lunettes, screen partitions, mantels, and built-in

furniture, such as cupboards and book-cases, as well as iron, bronze or wood grilles, doors, balusters, gateways, and hardware.

An architect always designs every detail that is new, though he may buy old rooms—or mantels or ceilings or floors—and fit them as does a decorator. And if old woodwork is to be bought, it is necessary that he be told of it at the earliest moment possible, so that he may design a setting in which it will be properly at home, instead of building a room without knowledge of its existence, and then being obliged to cut it up and refit it into a space that takes to it neither kindly nor becomingly.

It is also necessary that he adjust his wall surfaces to accommodate overlarge pieces of furniture, or keep their style and size in mind even at the beginning of his design for the house. Therefore, it is essential that he be shown as much of the furniture to be used as possible, since it will not do at all to house Spanish furnishings in Georgian or French surroundings. Nor may he design open-raftered, rough-timbered rooms, in which are to be put furniture in the style of Sheraton, Hepplewhite or Duncan Phyfe. He finishes each room elaborately or simply, in accordance with the intended expenditure of the client and the style of the house.

Certain styles—such as those of the French Louis or Renaissance periods, or the Elizabethan or classic Georgian—naturally necessitate greater elaboration of interior detail on the part of the architect than houses of more primitive type. In a simple type of house, the architect constructs a simple stairway, and more than likely composes mantels as well as trim by merely assembling ready-made moldings. He may perhaps find old planks or shutters, with which he panels one end or side of a room into which he fits a mantel as well as cupboards; or he may panel or wainscot one or all of the rooms. He, of course, designs the trim, selects the hardware, and lays the floors. That is about all.

But in a Georgian, French, Italian, or English house of consequence, the architectural interior—including the em-

bellishment in color—can quite possibly equal, both in cost and in importance, the structure of the building.

Let us, therefore, rather briefly indicate what is meant by interior architecture in a few of the most typical styles. Since stairways are never designed by any but architects, let us put them at the head of the list.

STAIRWAYS

Beginning with a cottage of most primitive Colonial farm-house type, we have the plainest, steepest, go-up-to-attic stairway. Sometimes the spindles are set in a sort of frame between the wainscot and the rail, but usually the risers are so high and the steps so narrow that a hand-rail is set between newel and posts. The beauty characteristic of the Colonial stairway lies in the fragile slenderness of the rail and spindles. If it becomes heavy or loses the graceful hand-made curve of its rail, it becomes charmless and commonplace. A very simple and good type of Colonial stairs is illustrated in Plate 32.

The circular stairway is illustrated by one in my own house (Plate 54) and by the one in Plate 12, which I designed to replace the stair illustrated on the same page. Such stairs are quite suggestive of Cinderellas in gingham frocks, compared with the superlative beauty and elegance of the outstanding feature of a Georgian interior—the unattached or "flying stair." In its simplest form, the balusters and hand-rail are of wood; sometimes, in finer forms, the spindles are of wrought iron, though the hand-rail is of wood—a combination of much greater sophistication.

A stair that might almost be called multi-styled is one with stone steps, wrought-iron spindles, and a wood hand-rail, and is equally suited to Georgian, French or Italian surroundings.

Closely related to the Georgian flying stair is the unsupported Italian stair, which is set into the wall like a shelf, but has no support except that which is made by riser and

tread closely joined together. The most beautiful of these stairs are made of marble, with balustrades of wrought iron.

Classified as Tudor or Jacobean English, but equally suitable in primitive, unpainted houses, are the square-turning or straight-mounting unpainted stairs of chestnut or oak or other wood, with hickory-nut-shaped carving at top and bottom of the stair posts. When restrained and simple in design, they are good; but when overheavy, hard and shiny, and machine-turned, like the newel post in the upper half of Plate 12, they are bad.

Tudor houses—also certain German houses—have huge hollow-square staircases of dark-stained oak. Often the posts go up to the ceiling, so that the whole stairway is set in a frame or enclosed in screens of intricate carving or pierced work.

A stair that is charming in a Spanish house might have tiles set into the face of the risers. When the balusters are varied, they are especially delightful, as all things which show hand-made irregularities are apt to be; meaning that the spindles are of the same height and thickness, but the spool-turnings of no two are alike. Their variety rather inexplicably adds quality to the variegated tiles.

French houses naturally suggest stairs of Caen stone or marble with wrought iron, bronze, and gilded rail.

CEILINGS AND WALLS

Ceilings and walls are necessarily details of interior architecture that are more or less determined at the time of the drawing of the first plans. Often they are included in the original estimates—especially if the elaboration of their finished detail has been determined. At all events, their general character has been considered from the start, and preparations made for their being plastered, open-beamed or faced with other material. If an old ceiling has been bought, it must be fitted to the room—or the room to it.

If the ceiling is to have ornamented plasterwork, the

architect designs it, and with it the cornice which joins the ceiling to the walls. Cornices are often made of wood, but unless the walls are of wood also, plaster is more satisfactory. Plaster is, in fact, the outstanding material of interior wall and ceiling decoration. With it every building material known can be imitated, and with it every possible detail of molding or ornamental full-relief or bas-relief be executed at least expense and with best effect.

PLASTER

Few people, perhaps, realize how large a part plaster plays in the embellishment of most rooms. Not only are ceiling motifs, cornices, and pilasters usually of plaster, but shell-shaped ceilings of niches and cupboards, and even open-timber ceiling beams, especially when decorated with carving or painted design in the Spanish or Italian manner, are of plaster six times out of ten. Beautifully detailed French paneling is of plaster almost as often as not! The question, "When is marble plaster?" might quite truthfully be answered, "More times than not!"

Somewhat like the precarious balance of the Leaning Tower of Pisa is the question of how much imitation material may be used without giving the whole composition an effect of sham? Wood painted in imitation of marble, gold paint instead of gold leaf, plaster painted like bronze, plaster in imitation of wood, linoleum in imitation of tile or marble —it is a nice question whether to say, "The better the imitation, the greater its offense," or to decide that "The nearer its approximation to the real, the more admirable it is."

In other words, is there an ethical difference between a plaster-beamed ceiling which would deceive the most knowing eye, and rubber tiles which, no matter how perfectly produced, could never be taken for anything but what they are? Is it because they are eye-deceiving that the first are admitted in the best rooms of houses of the highest class, while the second are granted entrance only to the back? Or

is the ban on the type of material? Plaster ornamentation, at any rate, has always held its place without need of being other than itself, while rubber as an imitator of marble or tile is so completely different in texture from either, that it does not really imitate at all!

Or is its worth a matter of situation? In great buildings —likewise in palatial houses—one exacts that fine materials be what they seem. Plaster undisguised is real. It becomes imitation when it is gilded to look like carved and gilded wood on mirror frames, or marbleized on walls, pilasters and wainscots. But if whatever it is made to seem, is beautiful, what more should one ask? Far better install beautifully designed plasterwork, expertly molded or painted, than wood or stone, or even marble, that is unpleasing in color and ugly in design. Besides, who amongst us can *live* in a marble room? Go into it, oh, yes; but live in it—?

There is, at all events, the best possible precedent for the use of plaster in imitation of marble wainscots—also of pilasters and walls in Georgian or eighteenth-century English—no less than in Italian rooms. There are likewise the precedents left by the best Florentine, Roman, and Venetian architects in the use of plaster to imitate wood in ornamented ceilings. Without plaster the ornamentation of our houses would be reduced to the plain painted or papered walls, with wooden picture moldings, chair rails and baseboards; or else to the pine room—at present not merely a fashion, but a craze—and an occasional room of Jacobean paneling. After all, there is no reason why plaster should be belittled; it is a medium by which smooth-finished fineness is obtained, without which most of our loveliest interiors would be as plain and flat as the inside of a bandbox.

On the other hand, rough plaster surfaces share with varnished golden oak the responsibility for more ugliness of interior than that produced by any other medium. Whether they be stucco, plastic paint, or plaster of sorts, rough walls of this kind—suggesting maps of the moon or a beach that has been violently pitted with rain—have not even the excuse

of utility, since they are as dirt-catching as they are vulgarizing to everything brought into contact with them. A sanded finish, at most a trifle coarser than flat wave-washed sand of a smooth beach, is an admirable background for furniture of the cruder varieties, and for hangings of Indian print, tapa cloth and Navajo blankets—possibly also for the cruder tapestries—but is scarcely suitable to needle-point or to fine brocades and velvets. It would be difficult to combine two textures that produce more cheapening results than velvets and fine silks against a stalactite wall.

Each style of house dictates more or less distinctly the details of its interior. It is never necessary to follow a period so closely that individuality is lost. A house should never be looked upon as though it were one soldier in a regiment—Spanish, Georgian, French, Dutch, or whatever the soldiers' uniforms proclaim them. But it is necessary—not because of any esthetic decree, but merely for becomingness—that primitive things be put together and placed against a background that shall bring out their beauty instead of their crudeness; and that fragile, smooth, fine things be assembled against a smooth, fine-detailed background. All of which explains why certain styles have gradually made their own definite selections, and why custom has naturally classified like with like.

You can classify as much as you please—and not merely with individuality, but with esthetic success—so long as a feeling of suitability and becomingness is preserved. No one is less regimentally exact than an architect of talent. If there is one thing he takes to less gladly than to another, it is putting *b* precisely after *a*, and *c* after *b*. But, naturally, if you have asked him to build you an Elizabethan house, he will instinctively suggest a great square staircase with oak wainscot and Jacobean rooms, and design a living-room with linen-fold paneling, and Old English arched carving over the mantel. But, if you give him any encouragement, he will do any one of a dozen other things; he will leave the walls plastered plain and put in a vaulted ceiling, or he will leave

James W. O'Connor, Architect

A DELIGHTFUL ROOM WITH A HUNTING PERSONALITY

[PLATE 20]

Julius Gregory, Architect

CASEMENT WINDOWS AND QUAINT CHINTZ EQUALLY SUITED TO COLONIAL OR ENGLISH INTERIOR

[PLATE 21]

the ceiling flat and prepare the wall for paper. Or if furniture is to be of mahogany rather than oak, he will choose an interior with smooth walls and classic pilasters that is perhaps quite Georgian.

Even if the house you have chosen is Italian, it can be in accord with Georgian, since Georgian is purely classic, and it was from Italy and Greece that classic architecture came.

For a Spanish house, let us say that he designs lovely spindled grilles of wood, and courtyard balconies, and that he builds you door-frames that are neither too floridly Rococo nor Moorish nor Venetian—nor set round with violent-patterned tiles! Let us say that he leaves the door openings plain, or framed with wood in the age-old posts and lintel construction, with carving or painting of the cross-beam.

In a French château of the Louis periods he has less leeway. Yet even so there are endless modes of paneling and of painting French interiors. For a few of these see Chapter XIII.

MANTELS

Mantels naturally are in the province of the architect quite as much as the flues for which they are built. And since a knowledge of proportion is the first requirement of ability in an architect—just as a sense for color is the first requirement of a decorator—let it be urgently asked that mantels be chosen, or probably designed, by the architect and by no one else. An ill-fitting mantel is one of the most common faults of owner- or decorator-furnished rooms. The mantel may be beautiful in itself, but that is no reason for thinking it an object of becomingness to a wall against which it looks either like a monument or a postage stamp.

For a room of standard size and height, an architect quite possibly buys a mantel, either old or new; but, for a room that is especially low or high or wide, he designs one of suitable proportions to go in it; this unfailing sense of proportion, in fact, is one of the things that we ask of an architect.

If a decorator is to complete the rooms, the architect seldom puts in any color, unless he has an unusual taste in color and is asked by the owner to complete the painting. If there is to be no decorator, the architect completes the foundation color, or at least helps his client in the selection of colors that are harmonious with her furnishings, and she does the rest.

HOW THE ARCHITECT AND DECORATOR MAY COOPERATE

An architect's cooperation with a decorator would be something like this: Let us say the client, the architect and the decorator together have decided that there is to be a pine room, a green-walled French-paneled living-room, and a cream-white dining-room, with hangings that the decorator has suggested of green and cream brocade. There is to be a scenic paper in the hall that the decorator is to put on. In this arrangement, the architect finishes the pine room complete—walls, cornices, ceiling, doors with hand-wrought latches and hinges, window framing, mantel, built-in cupboards, bookcases, and floor. In the hall he builds a flying stairway, designs the trim with broken pediment over-doors, cornice, chair-rail, and lays the marble floor. In the living-room he designs the mantel, the ceiling, the paneling, and the floor. In the dining-room he designs a mantel, cornice, ceiling ornamentation and pilasters, lays a herringbone wooden floor, and his job is ended.

The decorator then comes in, puts on her scenic paper—an old one in her own collection—and paints the woodwork that has been built by the architect to tone with a tint in her paper. She paints the living-room green, the color of her brocade, and the dining-room the cream that is the background of the green. She decorates and finishes all the bedrooms, and all the service end. In the principal rooms she puts down rugs, puts up the hangings, and places the furniture, as well as the rugs, lamp-shades, and ornaments throughout the house.

To repeat: The greater the importance of the house, the greater is the owner's obligation to let the architect complete his own creation. In small or unimportant houses, the architect considers that his work is ended when he has finished the stairs and doors and window trim. But in a great house, an architect of high professional standing in consultation with the taste of the owner completes all the lower rooms, leaving the decorations of bedrooms and the service end of the house to be completed either by a decorator or by the owner himself.

Few architects buy furniture for private houses; occasional ones do, and all do occasionally.

X

THE PRINCIPLES OF COLOR HARMONY

MUCH as style, form, and proportion mean to the beauty of every interior, nothing means so much to the personality of a house as *color*. Color can so enchant you that all other details are overwhelmed. Or it can so distress you that there are no compensations possible.

Without color, every object that surrounds us, everything we own, or look at, is lacking in beauty, warmth, gaiety, charm, sympathy, strength, and vitality. Without color, even we ourselves are uninteresting. A colorless house or a colorless person is equally antipathetic, dull, drab and lifeless. But because some people are inarticulate in their expression of color, it does not follow that their love for beauty of color is less than that of others who are skilled in its arrangement. Nor is there proof that those who unknowingly surround themselves with discord might not greatly prefer harmony were they given the opportunity of esthetic cultivation.

The phonograph, the player piano, and even more notably the radio broadcasting of best music, have brought knowledge of musical harmony to thousands who otherwise would have little or no opportunity to cultivate appreciation of that which is good, instead of being immunized to that which is bad. But there is no way as yet of broadcasting harmony of color. One inevitably associates music with color, because both appeal to the emotions, both create visions of beauty quite as much for those who merely look or listen as for those who design or compose.

Of course, there are those who, without imminent danger of insanity, can endure strumming and banging upon a neighbor's never-closed piano. (Whoever it was that im-

pressed American parents with the idea that excruciating piano-playing by their utterly talentless offspring is evidence of "culture" has more than much to answer for!) And the same nerves that can, with seeming indifference, endure assault and battery from an out-of-tune musical instrument, are not likely to suffer greatly from the silent jangles and visual discords of color.

Let us, therefore, leave the discord endurers to themselves and consider color from the point of view of those who not only love beauty of harmony but appreciate this quality too much to be content to go through life without having it around them.

TALENT OR CULTIVATION

It is true, of course, that certain persons—they are very rare—are born with what is called a notable color sense, just as others are born with a notable talent for music. And it it also true that these few can never be equaled in original composition by the thousands upon thousands who have slight facility or aptitude, but no talent to speak of at all. But the point to be brought out is this: That just as it is not necessary to have a heaven-born ear for music in order to learn to listen to music with appreciation and pleasure, or to play the piano with fluent ease, neither is it necessary to have a heaven-born eye for color in order to understand the principles of its harmony.

Much as musical facility is accomplished by learning to read notes, practising with the fingers, and cultivating an appreciative intelligence by means of a listening ear, color skill can be acquired by learning the rules of harmony from color charts, and cultivating an appreciative intelligence by means of an observing eye. This chapter, therefore, is written especially for those who really love beautiful color arrangements when they see them, and who would like to make such arrangements for themselves, but have never happened to be shown the mechanical process by which color harmonies are created and discords avoided.

Those of you who have made a study of color in fine arts classes will find nothing new in this chapter until you come to Figure 54, which is a device of my own. But to those who do not happen to know about triad harmonies, monochromatic neutrals, and complementary accents, as well as barricaded family groups and near-relation discords, I will try to explain as briefly but as clearly as possible the composition and use of color charts.

MAKE YOUR OWN COLOR CHARTS

Although the most important chart is reproduced in this chapter in full color, so that its principles may be understood by merely looking at it, I would suggest that you take the trouble to make a set of charts yourself, because the practical experiment in color-mixing gives a better understanding of how to make unlimited color-blendings of your own by merely following the same principles.

The directions for making the charts suggest kindergarten work, but they are not quite as easy as they sound. Because, unless you are as painstakingly accurate as a chemist following a formula, an unequal mixture of the colors (or weakness of their intensity) will so alter the combinations that the results will be all wrong—and the charts useless.

However, this is how to begin: Go out and buy a sheet of white drawing-paper and six small-sized tubes (or little square dishes) of any reliable make of water colors, one tube (or dish) each of cobalt-blue, alizarin-crimson, cadmium-yellow, violet, white and black, and a small paint-brush. Also collect a pencil, a pair of scissors, a five-cent piece, a sheet of thin cardboard, a dozen cups and saucers or other receptacles, a salt-spoon, and a bowl of clear water.

TO PREPARE YOUR COLORS

Squeeze half a tube of yellow paint into a cup; squeeze precisely the same amount of blue paint into another cup,

and the same amount of red paint into a third cup. Measure the amounts by the length left in the flattened end of each tube. Add *just enough water* to each to make the paints fluid. A tube that is dried out will take a little more water than a tube that is half liquid. The paints must be about as thick as medium cream, because the colors must be as intense as possible.

Cut a twelve-inch square of drawing-paper; cut an even-sided triangle, about six inches on each side, out of the piece of thin cardboard; lay it in the center of the drawing-paper; put a pin (or a thumb-tack) in the exact middle of it—so that it will revolve on this center but cannot side-slip. Turn it so that one point rests at the top and the other two at the corners of the base. Cut a small pattern of cardboard an inch wide by five-eighths of an inch high, lay it across the top point, and draw around it. Do the same at the other two points.

CHARTS AND COMBINATIONS

Fill in the rectangle at the top with the yellow paint you have dissolved, the one at the lower right with blue, and the one in the lower left with red. These three colors, painted as strong as they can be, are the "primary" colors, from which all colors are made without any other addition (excepting white or black). Next, turn the triangle so that the points come midway between the rectangles drawn. Cut three-eighths of an inch from one end of the oblong pattern, thus making it a square; put this square at each point of the triangle, and draw around it.

Now take a salt-spoon and put two spoonfuls of yellow on a clean saucer; rinse the spoon and add two spoonfuls of red, and mix them thoroughly. The result will be orange (called a secondary or binary color). In the same way, mix equal quantities of yellow and blue, which will give you the secondary color, green. Violet, the third secondary color, is made by mixing equal parts of red and blue. This can be done if your paints behave nicely, but they so often insist upon

separating into red and blue granulations that *won't* mix, that this one combination is much safest and easiest to buy mixed by a paint chemist, in a tube called violet. At all events, whether mixed by you or by the manufacturer, paint pure violet in the bottom square you draw; put green in the upper right one and orange in the upper left. It is very important to

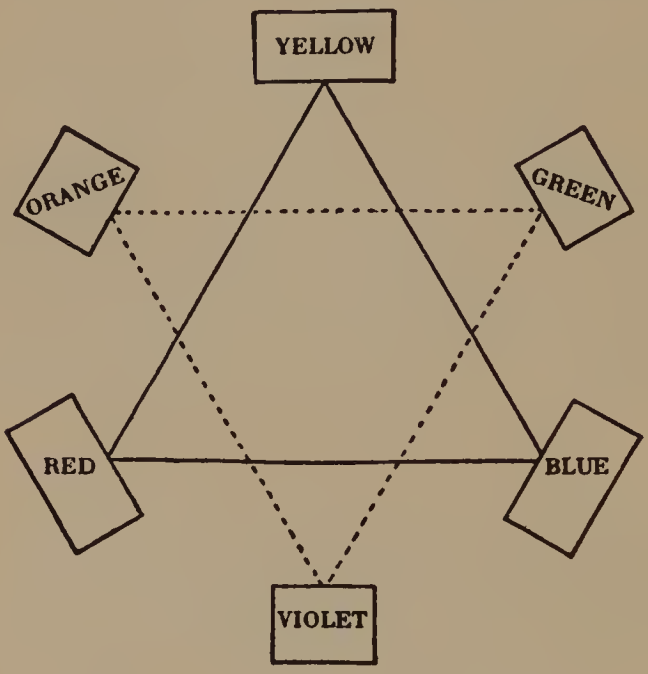


Fig. 51

BEGINNING YOUR OWN COLOR CHART—PRIMARY AND SECONDARY COLORS

notice that these mixtures are even; that no binary favors one primary more than the other. Remember that the three primary colors are in the rectangles, and the secondary colors in the squares (Fig. 51).

Now, in six other saucers, mix a spoonful each of two neighboring colors—yellow and orange, orange and red, red and violet, etc. Turn your triangle so that the points come exactly between the yellow and orange, red and violet, blue and green. Place the five-cent piece at each point and draw around it. Turn it again and draw a circle between yellow and green, blue and violet, red and orange. In these circles

paint a half-and-half mixture of the primaries and binaries that each is between. These are the tertiary or third-degree colors. The one halfway between yellow and orange is made of an equal mixture of yellow and orange, and is called yellow-orange. The one midway between red and violet is

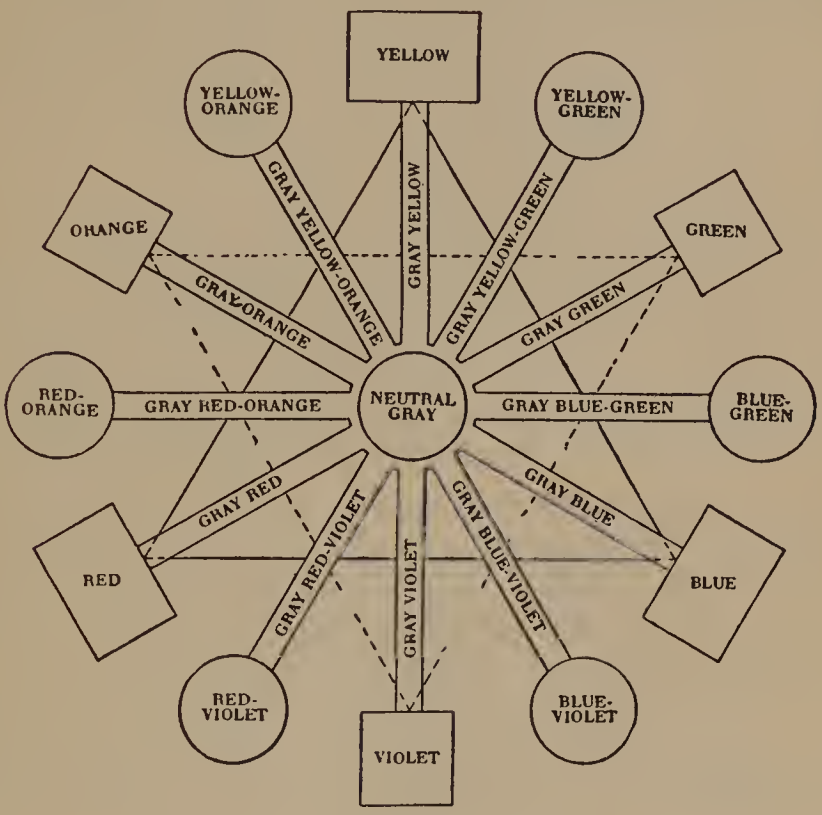


Fig. 52

DIAGRAM OF COMPLETE CHROMATIC COLOR CHART

made by mixing even quantities of red and violet, and is called red-violet. The third, between blue and green, is blue-green. Yellow-green is between yellow and green, blue-violet between blue and violet, and red-orange between red and orange. These twelve hues complete the chromatic color scale in its highest intensity.

Remove the cardboard triangle and draw a five-cent-sized circle at the hub of the chromatic circle—where the pin went through. In this hub-circle paint the color "neutral gray."

This color (or colorlessness) is made by mixing equal portions of your original primary red, yellow, and blue. Theoretically, this combination should make white, but the only way this can be achieved is by fusing the three colors without mixing them. To prove it, take a small circle of paper painted yellow, red and blue in three equal divisions, like a pie cut into three pieces, and fasten it on a child's top. When it is spun, three colors thus fused but not mixed will turn to white. But in mixing paint, or even in looking through the three colors of glass, the result is neutral gray—when the primary quantities are equal.

Having painted this gray in the center of your circle of colors, mix equal portions of the neutral color and yellow, and paint a narrow strip (or spoke) between the yellow rectangle and the gray center (Fig. 52). This color is called gray-yellow. Mix half gray with half yellow-green and paint a spoke of it between the yellow-green square and the gray hub; and label this spoke or strip, gray-yellow-green. Repeat this with the twelve colors; mark each of the neutral tones gray-red or gray-yellow-orange, or gray-blue-violet, and the chromatic chart is finished. The colors can equally well be put in uniform squares or circles, but the shapes as indicated define primary rectangles, secondary squares, tertiary circles, and pastel spokes, at a glance. The use of this chart, now that it is complete, will be explained as soon as we make a value chart.

HOW TO MAKE A VALUE CHART

This is very simple. Rinse all the cups and saucers except those containing the colors painted in the three rectangles and three squares. Take a fresh piece of paper and divide it into six up-and-down sections. In the center of one of these, paint a horizontal block of undiluted yellow (in the space marked "intense" in Figure 53). Now mix one-quarter of white with three-quarters of yellow, and paint a strip of the mixture above your primary yellow. Then mix one portion of yellow with one portion of white and put the result in a

strip above that. Then mix one-quarter of yellow with three-quarters of white and put that above the others. Then take black and do the same: three quarters yellow and one-quarter black just below the primary yellow; half-and-half below that, and three-quarters black to one-quarter yellow at the bottom. Repeat this procedure with each of the primary and secondary colors.

COLOR VALUES

These various tints and shades are known as high and low values. The original undiluted color is known as middle value—or full intensity. A tint that is a quarter white is called low light. Half white is called light. Three-quarters white is high light. A shade that is one-quarter black is high dark; half black is dark, and three-quarters black is low dark. (See Fig. 53.)

Technically, the colors that have been mixed with white are known as tints, those that are mixed with black are shades. Professional painters and all teachers of fine arts make a great fuss about the ignorance of any one who asks for a shade of palest red or blue. An expert would hand such a person primary red or blue mixed with the least bit of black; but all the rest of us would select an almost white tint. Not one person in a million bothers in the least about the meaning of "tint" or "shade"—or even "hue"—beyond explaining them, as I am doing now.

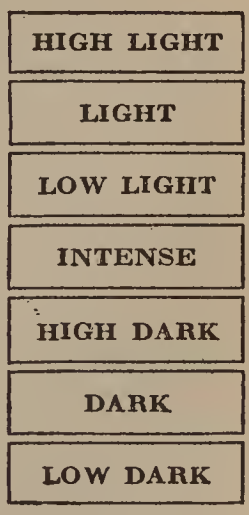


Fig. 53
VALUE CHART

Each separate color on the chromatic chart is a separate hue. Nile green and dark leaf-green are the high light and low dark of the same hue. Nile green and yellow are different hues.

There are three ways of changing a color: mixing it with another color changes its hue; mixing it with black or

white changes its value; mixing it with its complement makes it a pastel color.

COMPLEMENTARY COLORS

Put the chromatic chart in front of you, and in place of the triangle cut a strip of cardboard in the shape of an arrow; put a pin through the middle of it, and pin it so that it can swing around like a weather-vane. To find the complement of any color, swing the feather end of the arrow in front of it, and the color the arrow points to is its complement. Complementary colors are occasionally called opposed colors, which would certainly seem more sensible, since the complement of each color is that which contains none of its own hues. Red is the complement of green, which is a mixture of blue and yellow and contains no red. Orange is made of red and yellow, and contains no blue; therefore blue is its complement. Yellow and violet, which haven't a trace of the same blood, are complementary colors. Yellow-green and red-violet are too remotely connected by the kinship of blue to be classed as relatives. Blue green and red-orange are utter strangers.

Complementary—or opposed—colors have a curious effect on each other that is interesting to experiment with if you make your charts yourself. They lose all brilliancy if any portion of one is mixed with the other. Equal parts of vivid yellow and strongest violet mixed together result in neutral gray. The same gray is the result of mixing the strongest blue with orange, or green with red, or any of the intermediate hues, such as red-violet, with yellow-green. One of the uses of a chart is to see by it which colors are safely blended and which others cannot be mixed without burning to ashes.

A small amount of every color's complement mixed with itself turns the original color to a pastel hue. And yet, put near each other but not mixed, complementary colors are the most brilliant contrasts possible to produce. It is very necessary to know the complement of the keynote of each color

scheme, because a complementary accent is to harmonious color arrangement what salt is to food. If there is none of this ingredient, the composition is apt to lack flavor, but too much of it is a violent emetic! And now to explain:

HARMONIOUS AND DISCORDANT FAMILY RELATIONS

On a piece of thin paper, trace an outline of your chromatic chart and color it. Next, draw a long line through the center of each rectangle and square *except orange*, continuing through each pastel spoke; and connect these barri-

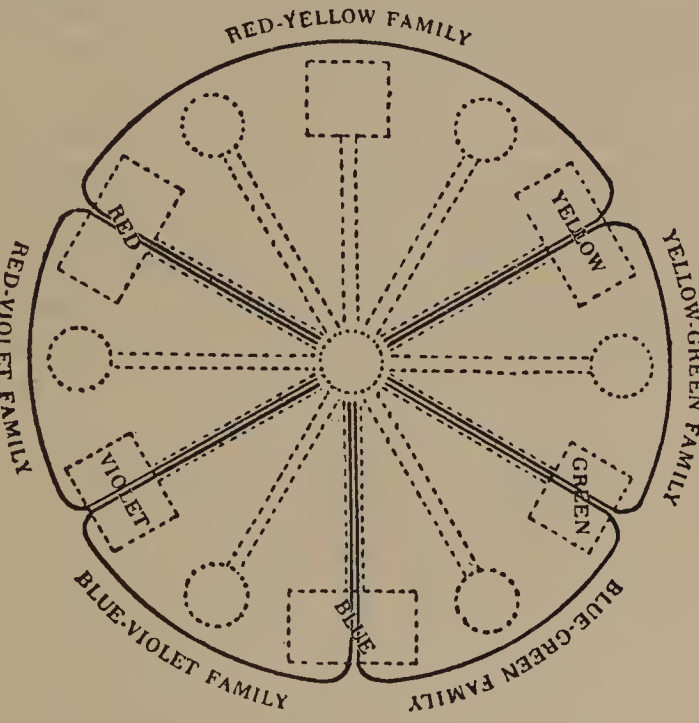


Fig. 54
CHART SHOWING THE DIFFERENT COLOR FAMILIES

cades with encircling lines, so that the chart is divided into one double and four single sections. (See Fig. 54.) Each of these sections is occupied by a single family, dwelling in complete accord. The safest recipe for harmony, therefore, is to keep within the immediate family section as marked by each of these boundaries. For instance, the line running through

the center of yellow and gray-yellow, and connected with the line through green and gray-green, enclose the family of yellow married to green and the various yellow and green-hued children of that pair. The sister of green, in the same way, is married to blue. Blue's brother is married to violet. Violet's sister to red. But red is married to yellow, and orange is one of their children.

In each of these family sections (one double-sized and four small), discord is impossible; the two parent colors, with their intermediate-hued children, live in perfect harmony with each other, and with their own neutrals and their values, including every shade and tint—creams, browns, slates, and grays—in the big yellow-red family. Gray-reds and gray-violets are lightened to pink-violet-cream and violet-silver-gray in the smaller red-violet family, or to whatever combinations the hues of each group alone (or with the addition of white or black) accomplish.

But just as the families within the enclosures made by each barrier are in undisturbable accord, the nearest neighboring cousins on either side of the barriers are discords. Red-orange and red-violet fight like Kilkenny cats. Red-violet put next to blue-violet, and blue-violet put next to blue-green, and yellow-green put next to blue-green, all have hysterics. Only great masters of color can make discords behave harmoniously, and then only with the most perfect adjustment of hue and value as well as neutral predominance. The warning, therefore, cannot be too prominently posted that those not supremely color-gifted—unless purposely attempting jazz—would better leave these cousinly discords alone.

TRIADS OF HARMONY

If you have made no chart, cut a paper triangle of the size indicated by the triangle outline and pin the middle of it to the middle of the gray center circle of the colored chart in this chapter. If you pin it so that it is held at the center of its own outline and at the exact center of the gray circle, no

matter where it swings its three corners will infallibly point to colors that are in harmony with each other. Yellow, red, and blue; violet, orange, and green; red-orange, blue-violet, and yellow-green, and so on, are each triads of harmony, which may be combined with safety *if modified either in quantity or intensity.* This is an unbreakable rule.

The confident belief by the unperceiving that all triads are "safe" would seem rather to explain why so many interior decorations attempted by the totally taste-deficient are so colorfully horrible! No school of design ever told its inattentive pupils that triad combinations were to be taken in equal parts and at full strength! Yet this is exactly what certain so-called designers do with their color-box in front of them and not a vestige of tradition behind them! And that is *not* the way they should be taken.

In a closely related color scheme, such as one that is confined within the limits of its immediate family circle (see Fig. 54), colors may with safety be used in high intensity—combined, of course, with their own grayed hues and with any mixture of white or black. But the unrelated colors of a triad harmony must be softened down (grayed) or diluted either in value or in quantity.

Combining the triads in full strength is excellent for posters, since they are intended to hit you in the eye as hard as they can. But by modifying the intensity of these colors with black or white, or both, there are unlimited combinations of beauty that you can make.

For example, let us suppose your triangle is pointing to primary red and blue and yellow. Let us purposely begin with this triad because the first recipe given by every school of decoration is to put something red, blue, and yellow into every room. But this does NOT mean equal quantities or colors of greatest intensity!

Lighten the yellow to cream, gray the red to rose, silver the blue with high-light gray for the biggest masses; add the smallest accent of red's complementary color, green; and you have a lovely combination. Or suppose we make a personal

triad in detail. Let us say that you are thinking of a color scheme built on blue-green. Swing your triangle so that one point of it is at blue-green. The other points will indicate yellow-orange and red-violet. And this again demonstrates the necessity for modifying intensity or quantity. Few could possibly endure to live in a room that had blue-green walls, red-violet hangings, and yellow-orange furniture, with a splash of red-orange, which is blue-green's complementary color, added for salt.

No matter which triad of which two-color family or which monochrome you choose for your theme of color, all additions of white and black are considered colorless. Gold as well as silver is also considered colorless.

WEIGHT OF COLOR

Weight of color must be considered in order that a color scheme shall be in balance. Heavier color must go on the floor, lighter color on the ceiling, with medium color between the two, on the walls. If this rule is reversed and heavy color be chosen for the ceiling and light color for the floor, the room will threaten to turn bottom side up.

Weight of color is measured by its nearness or distance from yellow, which is the color-equivalent of sunlight. Yellow is the highest in luminosity or light-giving quality. Orange ranks next to yellow. Next in order come green, red, blue, and violet last. White and black are unique in their aloofness from color. No matter how almost white a tint or how almost black a shade, the least amount of color is rated as color. Black-violet, the darkest color possible, is rated purple. The lightest cream is more closely related to yellow, which makes 1/100th of its total parts, than to white, which supplies 99/100ths of its component parts.

XI

THE EMOTIONAL BEHAVIOR OF COLOR

APART from hue and value, every color has a definite emotional character that is restless, stimulating, soothing, charming, irritating or depressing, as well as temperamentally friendly or formal. Moreover, certain colors behave beautifully under all circumstances, while others do nothing of the kind.

As explained in the previous chapter, yellow represents light.

Red is the elemental color expressing fire, energy and primitive passion. In its brightest tones, red is the most brilliant, stimulating and approaching of all colors.

Vermilion is the strongest, brightest, most exciting color that there is. It, of course, affects people in different ways. It not merely stimulates and revivifies, but its cheering warmth comforts as well as delights those who happen to love it. If you are one of these, you are never quite happy without at least an accent of it somewhere. If it is not your color—if, you, for instance, are in sympathy with blue, all vivid yellow-reds are probably jarringly violent. In fact, an unexpected encounter with much of it might be something like meeting an uncaged lion roaming through the house.

Blue is ice, the coldest, most formal and most distant and retreating of colors. Blue and yellow make green—a combination of light tempered with shade.

Green, since it is the color of leaves and intended by nature to harmonize with every color, will do so if properly blended. Remember, however, that flowers have a quality of texture which modifies their hue. Remember also that greens are as varied in shade and tint as though composed of countless hues.

RED AND AGAIN RED

Red with gray gives us a deep wine-red, or darkened with black and accented with yellow it gives us the brown-toned crimson—sometimes called old Italian red—that is richly warm, dignified, restful, friendly and becoming as is no other color, to a very large, very high-studded room, with dark wood paneling. Old Italian red is the perfect background for objects of size and weight. It is the violoncello of color music.

Yellow and red—light and fire—produce orange and the most vivid blaze of heat and light.

Red lighted to an orange tone or used in full vermilion strength is like a cornet, inspiring and strongly accented, but is at its best when accompanied by a full orchestra of creams and blacks and browns. A room of waxed cypress, or of pine with embellishment of vermilion or of orange-red—sometimes called flame—in velvet, taffeta, brocade or wool damask, is satisfying as nothing else to the temperament to which this color appeals. Badly handled or taken out of its own family group, it is unendurable.

UGLIFICATIONS AND BEAUTIFICATIONS OF BROWN

Brown is a color of fourth intensity and has no right whatever to be listed next to red, which is a color of first intensity; but it is so closely associated with vermilion and its orange-tinted sister, flame, that its immediate consideration is logical, at all events. Brown can be the ugliest color; or perhaps the truer way to put it is that it is more often made ugly than any other color.

It is a tradition to regard brown as of mud-and-mustard homeliness, and therefore the least amount of thought spent on its beautification is considered good enough for it. Certain tones of brown do seem desperately ugly, but the ugliest brown is seldom as ugly—merely as a color in itself—as its treatment and environment make it appear.

All earth is brown, tree trunks are brown, shadows are brown—or brownish purple. Millions of people have brown hair or eyes, other millions on every summer beach in the world are turning their skins as brown as may be! *Brown is an essential of beauty.* Without brown and its dilutions of snuff, tan, fawn, beige, and sand, color harmonies would be like a musical score without a base. Nearly all brown can be reduced to ugliness or elevated to beauty according to its situation and use.

The old milk-bench and hanging shelves illustrated in Plate 55 are not beautiful either in quality or in color. They are made of combined woods in at least seven different tones of browns, pinkish, yellowish—two planks are greenish—with innumerable dents and scars of black. A quantity of this coloring used as the whole trim or wainscoting of a room would be not only ugly but squalid; and yet, used as an accent, it has value; the obviously long service in dairy and scullery of this one unit of furniture gives character to an otherwise merely "pretty little" cottage room.

Even black and its dilutions of gray would be cold and anemic substitutes for the warm depths of tones that are produced by deep browns, light browns, gray browns, golden browns, dark browns, tan browns. But brown more than any other color is perhaps dependent for its beauty upon texture rather than upon tone. A flower-bed newly cultivated, so that it is dark and rich and soft, adds immeasurably to the beauty of the plants seen against it. The same earth, hard-packed, is ugly in itself and detracting from the plants that uncomfortably stand in it. Most woods—as they are finished—are brown or dilutions of brown.

What is known as a patined surface of wood, which is produced by the polishing of time—combined with oil and wax—upon smooth, even, and carefully selected wood, is the most beautifying element of furnishing known. Brown at its ugliest is represented in coarse fiber surface and a greenish cast of hue, or yellowish green tan, or in oatmeal-gray cast of color and finish.

Brown wood becomes ugly, because vulgar, in smooth "high light" finish, or in rough dull bumpy wall-paper, or in combination with other vulgarities of design or color. It is at its best when the wood is expertly chosen and treated, and smoothly finished in its proper hue.

If a great amount of very dark wood is to be used for the walls, it must be balanced by nicely adjusted relief of becoming color, so that the room shall be homelike but not homely. It was not by accident that the somber, dark oak paneling of the Elizabethan period was relieved by windows, the size of the whole of the room's width, that admitted a counterbalancing amount of light.

The soft brown of cypress or the often unstained finish of pine are amenable to a reduction of window space in direct proportion to the lightness of their finished color. In reducing your window space it must be remembered, however, that all wood darkens with age—unless it is shellacked—which Heaven forbid!

APPROACH-ME-NOT BLUE

Blue—meaning not navy or Delft, but the more sophisticated French or Italian blue—by reputation, as already noted, is cold, restrained, and intellectual. One would expect it, therefore, to behave calmly, serenely, irreproachably under all circumstances; instead of which it is more impossible to manage than a temperamental opera singer, and more unamiable than Katherine the Shrew.

One blue article is charming, be it wall or hanging, sofa covering or chair; but bring a second blue article into close proximity with the first, and the chances are that there is a fight forthwith—which ends in the destruction of one or the other, or both. Attempt to assemble ten separate items of blue—and complicate this attempt by the test of daylight and lamplight—and you will believe Hagenbeck's control of ten tigers the easier accomplishment.

It is impossible to imagine the ravages that individually

beautiful blues can wreak upon each other! And if out of a hundred samples you find two or three that behave well together in the daylight, pull down the shades and light the lamps and watch their behavior then!

From the point of view of amiability and kindly behavior, yellow is if possible even better behaved than red. Reds often quarrel in the daytime though in perfect accord at night. But yellows of every tone can be put together with becomingness to themselves and equal becomingness to each other. Yellow-orange and orange-red, with every tint of yellow and cream, can be counted on at all times to beautify each other to the utmost.

GREEN

Green tints and shades of the same family go well together, though the family to which they belong often changes by day and by night. Green is known as the most restful of all colors, and in its endless variation of hues and shades and tints can be chosen to suit every human mood. It can, however, like brown, be very ugly and utterly light-absorbing —especially at night—if its shade be too dark.

VIOLET

Red and blue—fire and ice—consume each other and leave ashes, which is the reason why violet is the color of mourning, the color of nothingness, the color of twilight. The standardized violet-gray-black hue called neutral tint is the color of shadows.

Violet is also known as the color of mystery, because, besides being the nearest to lack of color, it is, next to black, the heaviest color known. Therefore it would be suffocating if used in unrelieved quantities, either on the walls or on the furniture. And yet in its intangible manifestation it could give to a wall an effect of immeasurable distance. This, however, is a problem in texture and value too difficult to be suggested to a novice, since the wrong value or the wrong texture

with the wrong lighting and the wrong furniture might all too easily produce the impression of being shut inside of an Egyptian tomb.

A FEW OTHER CHARACTERISTICS OF COLOR

Green and blue are known as receding colors; red, orange, and yellow are those which advance, meaning that rooms painted blue or green should seem larger than duplicate rooms with walls painted red or yellow. It has often been noted in hotels, where the rooms on different floors are identical in size, that persons who have at one time been given a room painted light blue or green insist that the duplicate red one they are in is only half as large as the other. That red comes forward is true, but not to a degree comparable with the difference of high or low value. Red, in other words, must be compared with green and blue of the same value—crimson with dark leaf-green or with a bright dark-blue or pumpkin-yellow. And in comparing a room of high-light Nile-green or pale sky-blue, it would be necessary to take pink or lemon.

Primary or binary colors in full strength are seasonings which, like salt and pepper, must be used with discretion except when a deliberate irritant is sought.

The grayed colors are the useful colors whose quantity is unlimited in rooms of distinction.

An unrelieved monotone is already defined by its own derivative—monotony. But a room fitted with so much relief that it looks like a spilled box of paints is equally unappealing.

THE COLOR OF THE BACKGROUND

The part which one color plays in every theme of decoration is much the same as that played by one instrument in an orchestra. Not that the simile is exact; but it will perhaps serve to explain what is meant, if we say that the background of a room is a bass viol, and the hangings and furnishings to be put into the room are the violins, cellos, cornets, French

horns, and so on. A background that is as strident as a saxophone will be suitable in a cocktail-room or a dancing-room that is of intentionally jazzed design. Saxophonic colors would be primary and binary colors in undiluted intensity.

Apart from these six banned hues, the degree of strength that can be used with harmonious results depends entirely upon the modifications—or irritations—of the other colors with which it is brought into close relationship.

There are two ways to choose color for a painted background. The first is to paint the background the color you like and suit the furnishings to it. The second is the reverse. It is also the simplest method—and the safest. There are two reasons only for considering the background first. One, if a painted decoration, or a scenic or other decorative wall-paper is to be used, it is chosen first and the draperies and furniture covering are selected to go with it. Reason number two, if you have a color in your mind and nothing can stop your impulse to mix it and have it put on, you will do the wall first and then find things to put against it—which may be easy, or may not.

But, taking the normal procedure for our example, let us begin with the most important, or better, the most appealing object that is to be put into the room. It may perhaps be a rug that you have to use—no, let us not begin with a problem of ugliness in a new room! There will be a whole chapter, later on, on the beautification of ugliness theme; so let us begin with an object of beauty, a picture, a Chinese bowl, a pair of vases, or perhaps best of all, a piece of chintz or brocade that you saw in a shop and couldn't resist. This is the easiest possible method of deciding upon the color of your wall. Merely choose from the colors of this central object of beauty, either taking one of its more neutral colors or lightening one of its stronger colors to a tint of wall suitability.

In choosing the color for your walls, it is necessary to bear in mind the various temperamental characteristics of colors and to pick out one that will behave as you want it to do. The best colors for backgrounds are all the tints of sand and cream

and pinkish taupe-cream, which are better when mixed with an undertone of light than when painted solid. For instance, you can build your wall on yellow orange, a color not to be used either in quantity or in strength; but, lightened with white and neutralized with gray, it will give you a safe background of grayish cream in which the yellow-orange element is unnoticeable except to give it an effect of glowing light.

A light-producing process in painting such a wall is to paint a first coat of yellow-orange in "high light" value, and then glaze or stipple it over with grayish cream.

Theoretically, white would seem a bad background, since the rule for a background is that it shall stay back, and not come forward and gobble up whatever is put before it. But against a white or lightest cream background you can put the clearest colors, such as watermelon, blue-green, emerald, or orchid. Against deep cream or pale lemon these colors are slightly creamed or lemoned.

One is taught that colors are more brilliant upon a background of white, which is composed of all colors, than upon black, which is complete absence of color. But if you place two identical bouquets of flowers, one against white and one against black of the same texture of surface, your eye certainly tells you that the flowers on the black background are seemingly the more brilliant. This is perhaps because their values are apt to be high, and therefore in greater contrast to lowest value, which is black.

Merely to give an example of the way to use a key: Let us suppose you have a pair of Lowestoft vases of putty-colored porcelain, decorated with raspberry-pink and red, blue-green and gold. These give you your background of putty-gray, with—if you like—paneling gilded and then wiped off, or the accentuation glazed in neutral tint. With these go raspberry-taffeta hangings, and blue-green small-sprigged brocade. If you use your triad chart you will see that raspberry, blue-green and orange are in harmony. Be moderate of this last. Let it be gold, or let it be diluted, or let it be in a copper bowl, book bindings or flowers.

Or suppose—still illustrating your vases and their triad—that you reverse the arrangement. You cannot very well attempt raspberry walls; but you can make your walls grayed blue-green with woodwork to match, and fill the room with gaily flowering but finely designed chintz on a putty-colored ground, using this to cover furniture of walnut or fruit wood. Or you may choose one of the light grayish browns that are actually dilutions of orange and neutral gray. Perhaps the material on a very small chair might be of the Lowestoft raspberry, the accent of missing orange being supplied in the chintz; if not, it can be furnished as already noted.

However, let us return to backgrounds by themselves, since furnishings must be put aside for later chapters of their own. Next to the various beige and cream tints, the easiest color to get right in painting a room is either blue-green or sea-green-blue. Your difficulty begins in adding blue-green or sea-green-blue fabrics, but with solid walls and trim there will be enough of it, and any object added should be of contrasting value. The hardest color to paint is pink. A tint so pale that it seems almost white becomes unendurable the moment the four walls reflect each other. It must always be remembered, when selecting wall-papers or paint samples, that four walls are at least twice as intense as one alone.

You have surely had this experience: The painter shows you a sample of color on a strip of board or on a patch of wall. You think you would like it a little more blue or a little more yellow, or you suggest that it be darker or lighter. Finally, it is exactly what you want. You go away. By and by you come back to find a room that is dark as night or shriekingly violent. You indignantly ask the painter why he has changed the color. You wanted just a touch of orchid—not a purple wall! Or you wanted it soft flesh, not intensified salmon. The painter shows you the pail of paint he is using. You look from paint to wall, and back to paint again; the wall seems to be covered with a red rash, and yet the paint in the pail is pinkish cream. All colors look many shades darker when four times reflected on the walls of a room;

but pink when wrong is more vulgarly wrong than any color one is likely to attempt—unless orchid is worse!

Many years ago, I had a room painted completely over four times. I had had a rather small pink-papered room at home that I liked, so I had a paneled bedroom that was fairly large, *painted* pink. It was horrible! I had it lightened to a higher value. No better! Then I had it tinted orchid. It was worse! Then I had it painted peach—which turned out salmon! Had the room been many degrees lighter, it would have been all right; but by this time its color had got on my nerves, so I gave it up, had it all repainted French gray—and hated it forever.

The rule is obvious: Choose a tint that you think *much* too light—no matter what color it is—and it will probably be what you have in mind. It is easy to glaze it or stipple it darker, but it takes much more paint (and time) to lighten a wall that is too dark than to darken a light one.

Green that has yellow in it should have a sample chosen for it that looks almost colorless, because, in spite of the fact that green is supposed to retreat, it can behave exactly like a candle-snuffer in its effect of gloom. The feat of applying deep green paint and producing an effect of emerald that is brilliant and luminous, both by night and by day, is possible, because it has been done; but the art of producing deep green without an effect of dull solidity, and of making it equally light-giving at night, is not within the knowledge of many.

One secret, perhaps, of luminosity of such a wall is a polished texture. Moreover, the effect of depth in painting a wall is obtained by means of glaze. A transparent color is painted on top of another, or a final solid color is stippled—or brushed partially off—so that the under color shows through. But what the tint of the under, and what the hue of the upper, and how many of them, is not easy to know. Usually a green room—unless of a very light tint—snuffs out every light put into it. There is a certain room about twenty feet wide by thirty feet long; its walls are covered with green Italian brocade; there are ten lamps and four

groups of side-lights, and the room is merely glimmering with patches of light in a surrounding of darkness.

A FEW WORDS OF ADVICE ON WALL PAPERS

If you are going to use any papers, especially any that have much pattern, hang up a number of strips of each, so as to be sure that the general effect will not be splotchy. Many papers that are entrancing in small pieces are unendurable when the pattern repeats so distinctly that you can't help counting the rows.

Another detail to watch is a surprising appearance of prominent color that you had not even noticed. The reason for choosing a corner of a room to hang your test lengths in, is that here you can see if the paper's background—unless white—is likely to be too strong or too dark.

Although papering will give you the most "furnishing" wall-covering at least expense, be very careful about buying too cheap a quality of paper. The cost of hanging is greater than the paper—usually. And too-cheap papers are pretty sure to fade. Good quality non-fadable papers last for years, even at the seashore; whereas a lower grade paper will turn into a rather sickly symphony in tans in one season. There are any number of papers at about a dollar and three-quarters or perhaps two dollars a roll that are guaranteed sun-fast. If you happen to live in a color-trying climate, you will know by experience that it is really a waste of money to buy either papers or materials that are not guaranteed to keep their color.

SCENIC PAPERS

These are very expensive, and they do not fit in every house; but anything more beautiful in, or more suitable to, a Colonial house than a scenic paper cannot be imagined—when properly chosen and properly placed. To those who have always lived with them, nothing takes their place; moreover, they last more than a lifetime, and are easily moved

from house to house. Therefore, if you buy a scenic paper—especially an old one that is priceless, it is wise to prepare for moving it by having the wall pasted over with muslin, and to hang the paper on that. Then, if you ever want to take it down, cut through the muslin as well as the paper in the corners of the room and also at convenient intervals with a sharp knife and pull it down. Have the paper-hanger lay it face downward on his table and wet the muslin. It will peel off easily. The old printing of scenic America shown in Plate 39 has been moved three times.

As a scenic paper is a panoramic picture, nothing must ever be hung upon it. You should no more hang a clock or side-lights on a scenic wall than you should hang them on a tapestry or a painting. Even objects standing against it should not interfere or be out of scale with its scenes. In halls or dining-rooms or drawing-rooms that have no other decorations they are especially happy hung above a very low chair-rail with paneling or painted plaster below. They look best usually with cream or oyster-white trim, and with hangings of taffeta in one of the softer colors of the scenes. They look very badly with fancy or overcolored woodwork and with confusing objects in front of them.

If a tall piece of furniture, such as a secretary, is to be put in a room with a scenic paper, the design of the paper should be especially worked out by standing the secretary where it is to go, and then letting a break of scene come behind it and having the pictures proceed from that point. A certain amount of adjustment must be arranged for, also, so that the principal scenes are centered on the principal wall space. (For other wall-paper suggestions see Index.)

IN THIS DAY OF COLOR RIOT

There is less need to-day for advising against what used to be known as American "mud-and-mustard" dinginess than for advising against color insanity. Whether the pictures illustrating innumerable advertised commodities are taken by

every one as "posters" or whether they are accepted by those of shock-proof sensibilities as "patterns" only the power to see into millions of American homes could reveal. But let us at least hope and pray that no man of sensitive taste—tired after a harassing day of turmoil and coming home to find comfort and repose—is obliged to spend his hours of relaxation amidst jangling discords of color suitable only to a madhouse.

Imagine the restful comfort to be found within walls of green-yellow, splotched with a crimson rash, amidst furniture covered and painted in lightning-struck scarlet or orchid and orange, with cushions of blue and olive and magenta, all resting on a carpet of black with disks of turquoise, lemon-pink and garnet! Imagine trying to find repose in a bed that is grass-green with ornamentation in violet and yellow; in a bedroom with pink walls, turquoise-blue curtains, and scarlet slip-covers! Fancy, a floor of shining red, purple, and jade-green tiles, a mantel of green and yellow tiles, wall decoration of blue and purple and orange, with emerald-green leather furniture studded with brass nail-heads and resting on a pink and purple rug! Imagine—but it is not necessary to imagine; merely look into a room set forth in the color-pages of some magazine advertising sections and seriously consider what "home" would be like were it one of these!!

By this I do not mean that all advertisements in color are bad, by any means. In fact, some are lovely. There was a bathroom-dressing-room, for instance, that appeared in half a dozen magazines and that was entrancing with jade porcelain and watermelon *toile de jouey* and half-closed shutters that you know must open out on a garden in Paris. But there are others that go to unimagined depths of vulgarity, and absurdity quite as great as that of the cannibals who fantastically bedeck themselves in the clothes of the missionary that they have eaten for supper.

XII

HOW TO USE COLOR CHARTS IN MAKING PORTRAIT INTERIORS

THE essential object of this chapter is to indicate some of the practical uses to which the color charts described in Chapter X may be put. For the purpose of illustrating the principles of color harmony as applied to actual furnishings, it might be amusing to select a few individual personalities and attempt what may be called portraiture in house decoration.

To begin with, therefore, let us imagine a number of people who are as different in type as they can possibly be, and then express the personality of each by means of a triad, a related family, a monochrome with complementary accent, and possibly attempt a discordant cousin theme. In other words, let us suppose that we are momentarily a firm of decorators, and that we are commissioned to decorate:

1. A town drawing-room for a social leader of utmost formality.
2. A country lounge-about room for outdoors-loving moderns.
3. A boudoir for an exotic beauty.
4. A country living-room for the stay-at-home mother of many children.
5. A dressing-room bathroom of unlimited extravagance and display of color.

THE TOWN DRAWING-ROOM

Each of these is to be as expressive of an individual personality as possible. Beginning, therefore, with the town

drawing-room, we must first of all visualize the personality of its owner. To express the restraint of her innate formality, let us neither overload her room with ornamentation nor overdo it with rich color. Let us also banish the consideration of children, or at least admit them only for a little while when they are on their best behavior—at tea or at Sunday lunch.

We should select a Period—French, most likely, or possibly Eighteenth-Century English, or its American derivative, Colonial Georgian. Blue would surely be "her color." We therefore choose the primary triad of blue, red, and yellow, but must modify it to the utmost. It will be safe to panel her walls and paint them pale silver-gray, since her favorite blue is certain to be the blue of the sky mixed with the gray of silvered clouds, this combination being the coldest, most formal monotone possible. Therefore, it is to be hoped that this drawing-room has a little of the western sun to cheer it at tea-time, especially as we must add gray furniture—or possibly cream—in gracefully restrained French curves or the satinwood fragilities of Hepplewhite. (Satinwood would supply our needed yellow.) To the blue and silver brocade of hangings and furniture—which, to avoid any chance of disagreement, we make of the same material—we will add two chairs of blue velvet which we may quite probably have to go to France to find! There should be an Aubusson tapestry carpet in gray-blue slightly oranged, yellow, and rose. A few odd chairs, settees or stools should be covered with needle-point in rose and blue on a beige background. (Both rug and needle-point illustrate the triad.)

There would be, of course, one or two glass-shelved cabinets displaying French or Chinese porcelains, miniatures, and snuff-boxes against a background of opened fans. Flowers always play a part in such a room, though their profusion is seldom lavish: Ophelia roses in a bowl, or delphiniums in tall vases, with other flowers in strength-avoiding shades.

The drawing-room of such a person is invariably twice and often three times curtained: glass curtains next to the

panes; heavy outer curtains of the French blue and silver brocade; flesh or deep cream-color taffeta curtains between the two. There are lambrequins, either of brocade with silver galloon, or of carved wood. A small open fireplace lightens the hearth, giving a charming but restrained note of welcome that exactly matches the quality of the lady's smile. On the walls there should be a portrait or two suggestive of the French or English school; also several mirrors in gilt frames, rather small. The room may suitably have a French clock of Apollo driving his chariot, a fine needle-point fire-screen, gilt appliqués with musical instrument motifs, and a small writing-table, prettily but not too adequately equipped.

If we are doing the whole house, we know that this owner will choose for her bedroom another tone of blue—with peach, perhaps, and a note of egg-plant purple. If there be a dark-paneled library, she will choose a monochrome of greens rather than one of reds to complement the wood.

Her dining-room might be in cream, orchid, and gray-blue-violet—a single color family with complementary accent. Whatever its colors, however, each room is necessarily feminine but restrained, luxurious but precise—and utterly impossible to imagine with anything out of order or even moved out of place.

A COUNTRY LOUNGE-ABOUT ROOM FOR OUTDOORS-LOVING MODERNS

Such a room would, of course, be utterly unlike the fragile gray blueness of the drawing-room sketched above. The owners would probably like their house to be in the modern manner—a manner, let us add quickly, that shall go no further than a certain up-to-dateness and that shall express neither clumsy crudeness nor decadent distortion, nor yet drab monotone in brown and steel. It shall be very gay and colorful and alive and youthful. (For monotone decoration and other expressions of the strictly Modern interior see Chapter XXII.)

If the owners are sunburned, active, outdoors-loving young people, probably the very best background that we could choose is one that, as much as possible, brings outdoors indoors. Selecting the sand of a beach as our background, we might make the walls a combination of rough and smooth plaster in a color of dry sand or cream. The rougher plaster, which is sanded in surface, contrasts but slightly with the smooth, which is to be used for bas-relief portrait panels, each depicting the owners of the house engaged in a different sport—polo, yachting, diving, hunting, tennis—and one of them a scene at the bridge-table in this identical room.

We must, of course, give them two studio windows with large square panes—windows to look out of, and to bring the unshaded sun in. Moreover, let there be also an enormous glass door with openings hinged to fold entirely back like screens across one wall, so that in good weather the room can be turned into a loggia. The frames of both windows are faced—at right angles to the sashes—with ground glass, behind which are receptacles holding bands of electric lights to be turned on at night. If these do not produce an effect of the blaze of midday, other bands of lights might also be set behind the cornice.

With this strictly neutral background of sand and colorless decoration, almost pure primary or binary colors could be used. The floor could be of orange or emerald tiles—let us not mix them!—subdued by rugs of sand and black. Honey-colored wood furniture may be upholstered with materials combining red-orange and green, with an accent of grayed violet. In such a room there should be no useless ornaments, but there could be brilliant flowers in one or two copper bowls or pots, and perhaps an orange-red lacquer writing-table of Modern design. No curtains are on the windows or doors in the daytime, but curtains of thin semi-transparent pale orange silk, drawn close at night, diffuse the brilliant lighting of the window-frames behind them, producing the impression of bright daylight. Or these curtains could be decorated in transparent color. The fireplace might be of

black glass, and there might also be one or two occasional tables of glass and steel, holding ash-trays and cigaret-boxes.

Or let us suppose that we are wrong, and that our young house-owners are less glare-loving, less heat-enduring. Let us consider that they might prefer inviting coolness as a respite from torrid outdoor heat and glare. In that case we could completely change this same room's personality by changing the color to that of the blue-green family. The walls then may well be grayish green, and the floor of black and white marble or oyster-gray stone. The furniture might be changed to gray or jade or turquoise, and the entire color scheme to one of black, gray-white, greens and blues, with curtains of oyster-white and occasional lights in the window-frames that can be turned on separately—of blue.

There is a chintz that for an effect of delicious mid-ocean coolness is unsurpassed. Its design is of sea-gulls in gray and white against a background of ocean waves in almost binary green and primary blue.

As already explained, when keeping a color-scheme within the boundaries of a small color-family such as that of blue married to green and all their blue-green children, their family hues can be used in full strength—especially when there are wide neutral spaces.

If windows are too sunny, Venetian blinds are coolest, but green-lined awnings give an illusion of space. If the room is definitely a loggia, nothing is more decorative than a fountain against a wall, with ivy trained as a background and pots of growing plants around the base.

In choosing textures for either suggested decoration of this room, it should be remembered that they must not be too fine, since such a room should not lose its suitability as a background for sports clothes.

A BOUDOIR FOR AN EXOTIC BEAUTY

Our third personality design, a boudoir for an exotic beauty, is also necessarily modernistic, but in a quite different

key. (A boudoir, by the way, is *not* a bedroom, a bathroom, or a dressing-room, but a small private sitting-room on a bedroom floor.)

This should be the sort of room that scarcely one person in a thousand could live in, and yet it must be the ideal setting for the person its coloring represents. Let us suppose, then, that the woman who is to live in it is fragilely thin, white-skinned, with red-gold copper-colored hair as flat as copper luster and as polished. Let us suppose her languid, exquisite, and utterly sophisticated. And this room must be so like her that any one, having seen her, would at once know it was hers. So we will face the walls with highly polished black glass, with mirror panels engraved in designs of converging streets. The ceiling is, of course, of silver. Side-lights are of steel and crystal. The "studio" window has glass curtains of orchid chiffon and heavy curtains of magenta satin. The carpet would be black, and the mantel of green-veined black marble. Over it might be a portrait of the owner in black against a curtain of emerald green and framed in silver. A broad divan covered with jade-green velvet should be set in a recess of engraved mirrors. A dozen very large square-box-edged plain satin cushions in flesh, orchid, magenta, and deep black purple should be packed too tight to slip against the mirror-back and sides—but *not* propped about on the floor! The lamps are of green quartz or of crystal with cream-colored shades; the ornaments all of jade, crystal, amethyst, and silver—or stainless steel. The exotic beauty's own hair—actually, and in the portrait—would supply the missing accent of yellow-orange that completes the triad of green and orchid and magenta. Or this entire room might be removed from this chapter on color, and translated into black, white, gray and steel.

A COUNTRY LIVING-ROOM FOR THE STAY-AT-HOME MOTHER

Now let us define an entirely different type of room, since we can scarcely imagine black and emerald and magenta as

a background for a country living-room for the stay-at-home mother of many children. The woman for whom we are doing this room is one whose hands and thoughts are chiefly occupied with her husband and children, who are to occupy the room as much as she. Their house is big and rambling and Elizabethan in type. The sun streams into the living-room through diamond-paned casements. Everything in it must be chosen with two prime qualities in view—cheerful homelikeness and unspoilability. The most unspoilable furniture possible to devise will be of oak, in Tudor design, with just enough carving to avoid plain surfaces that could be marred by whacks of toys and kicks of shoes.

If the sitting-room is to be extravagantly done, suitable walls will be of linen-fold paneling, with book-cases abounding in beautiful levant and morocco bindings, and with needle-point furniture coverings, palatial but unspoilable.

On the other hand, if the purse is not one-quarter deep enough for such a lavish scheme, the same room at reasonable cost could be achieved with walls covered with plain cypress boarding, filled and waxed. And there are numerous sprigged tapestry materials that are good in color and show no marks of fingers—not even spots. Velveteen wears well, as every one knows. And slip-covers of endless varieties of material, plain, figured or flowered, are utterly beautifying and practical, because they can be taken off and cleaned or washed.

In a room that is in a monotone of browns, color is beautifully supplied by colored cushions, ornaments and colorful book-backs.

This reminds me of a story that is true: The wife of an eminent author who had enlarged their library living-room was annoyed at the distressing emptiness of so many of the new book-shelves. So she went to a store that had advertised cheap editions and asked for "lots of books." Said the clerk: "Which books may I get you?" To the horror of the clerk, she answered, "Red ones!" She giggled afterwards at the clerk's obvious estimate of her literary taste.

In a room such as this—the family living-room—a

serviceable floor-covering is very essential. Of course, we all know that for wear and unspoilability an Eastern rug, whether Persian, Indian, or Chinese, is best. But it is beautiful only if one can afford to buy one that is in soft shades. (Few can.) On the other hand, figured rugs and carpets—in sharply defined colors—rise off the floor and hit you in the face! Plain carpet in one of the tones of dust-brown is always good, especially in a winter house. For summer use or for a simple cottage an excellent floor-covering for almost any type of room is Scotch wool carpeting, and it comes in a great variety of colors. One kind, made of camel's hair, is especially beautiful and durable. (For further discussion of Floors see Index.)

A DRESSING-ROOM BATHROOM OF UNLIMITED EXTRAVAGANCE

For our last "portrait" interior, a dressing-room bathroom of unlimited extravagance and display of colors, let us see how jazzingly colorful we can be; but at the same time let us see if we can make our theme resplendently pleasing.

On the theory that a combination of all colors produces neutrality, let us combine all the discords and present them with utmost brilliancy by covering the entire wall surface with mirrors gorgeously decorated, not with color applied to the surface, but with designs painted on the back of the glass before it is silvered. A process of long ago it is, but now revived with new and vivid effects by many modern artists; so let us ask the most modern of artists to paint for us a series of Chinese scenes in yellow-green and blue-green, olive and peacock-blue, blue-violet, red-violet, red-orange and magenta.

Let us have every violent contrast possible in the plumage of birds and the flowering vines, and in the robes of the Chinese figures. Let the shadows and tree-trunks be of purple and brown and black. Let us have a vaulted ceiling of brilliant chromium plate—like the silver-glass balls on

Christmas trees—and many hundred candle-power lights reflected upon it. Let us have a floor of amethyst glass, and a sunken tub big enough to swim in, lined with—if we are multi-millionaires—rose quartz; or if merely millionaires, with rose-colored glass. Let us have a dressing-table of emerald glass, chairs of lapis-blue glass upholstered in shagreen, and toilet articles of green quartz and chromium steel.

Or, instead of our Christmas-tree fantasy, we might have a ceiling of copper, a vermilion tub, and upholstery of leopard, tiger cub, or piebald pony skins—left natural, or cut and sewn in modernistic bands and rectangles or other geometrical figures.

At all events, let it not be said that this book is mid-Victorian!

As a matter of fact, this last interior, although intentionally extreme, is no exaggeration of rooms that are actually being done. Julian Howay—who has made an entrancing speciality of painting under glass—has created a number of marvelous designs of just this type. To the not fabulously rich, such rooms are out of reach, since the cost of one runs into many thousands—and, unless amazingly well done, they are amazingly bad.

The expert can always dare—and successfully achieve—what the inexpert may not attempt; but on the whole we shall be safer—and far more likely to attain to something of beauty—if we stand by such rules of convention as that "the smaller an object, the more vivid it can be." Large surfaces must be neutral—or at least so counterbalanced as to seem neutral—unless you want your room to look like a four-sided bill poster! For certain occasions perhaps you do. The present fashion for an amusement-room, a coffee-room, or a cocktail-room, might purposely and suitably be as vivid an interpretation of jazz as you care to make it. But a room that you spend much time in, day in and day out, should be suitable to other moods than those of gaiety and light-heartedness which prevail when you are surrounded by a horde of friends.

COLOR BEAUTIFICATION OF THE UGLIEST HOUSE FOR THE LEAST MONEY

Having finished these imaginary interiors in illustration of the method of assembling colors by means of color charts, it might be well to describe in detail my own methods in the selection of color in a few actual instances that were either especially easy or especially hard. And since the five "imaginary" themes were very expensive, I will begin my actual experience list with the ugliest house that I ever beautified for the least amount of money.

About ten years ago we rented a seashore cottage on a three-seasons' lease without ever having been inside of it. We knew its location, and I studied its floor-plan. Its rent should have impressed us as suspiciously low, but the agent wrote us an even more than normally eulogistic agent's letter, so we felt that it *couldn't* be very bad. But on the inevitably cold, raw, rainy day that we took possession, the why of the rent was quite self-evident. I had never imagined that any series of walled enclosures could be so hideously hopeless! The color scheme of the whole house was olive-green, purple-brown, mustard-yellow and maroon, and in the midst of this coloring loomed the bottle-shaped chimney breast and fireplace of the living-room, a thing of white-mortared orange brick. The trim was varnished golden oak and the furniture a mixture of maple, oak, and purplish imitation cherry. Walls and furniture coverings writhed and twisted in mustard red, maroon, and a variety of discordant greens, like the serpents of Medusa.

The immediate question was, what *could* I do on a reasonable outlay? And next, what would the landlord let me do?

I went out in what was now a deluge to find the landlord. He cared very little what I did to the walls, but he prized the golden oak trim and the orange-brick fireplace. So, taking these two "fixtures" as the foundation of the problem, I went to work. I took out every piece of red-purple pseudo-mahogany and put in all the articles of maple and oak.

Happily the rug in the dining-room was a greenish-brownish nondescript not especially noticeable. But the violent one in the living-room had to be rolled up and banished to the attic. (This was distressing, as floor covering is always high.) However, I had the wall papered with a very pale coral-brick-colored cartridge paper, much lighter than before, but in tones of the brick of the fireplace; and I covered the floor of the living-room with a plain brownish-sand-colored klearflax rug. In the three principal bedrooms upstairs I put gay-colored papers, and, the trim being not valuable, had it painted to match the papers. Then I went to Boston, where I found a very effective chintz with a tree-branch design that had clumps of brickish red and coral berries and plenty of foliage. I covered the furniture with slip-covers which I made myself. The windows were too tall for their width, so I took some strips of wood from a packing-box and nailed them end to end across the top of the window trim, like a pieced-together shelf. To this lambrequin foundation I tacked, first, deep pleatings of cheese-cloth, disguising the narrowness of the window frames, and then tacked the chintz a foot beyond the cheese-cloth. A long hemmed strip of chintz, about ten inches deep, tacked flat around the cross-board as lambrequins (Fig. 154), shortened the windows and hid the lack of rods.

I bought a big second-hand drop-leaf kitchen table, and put a tape-bound sand-colored denim cover over it. On this was a coral-colored sheet of blotting paper, with my writing materials, books and magazines, and a bowl of flowers. Scrub-oak branches in preserve jars decorated the barest spots in the room. As the last touch I stood geranium pots on the window-sills, and the room was quite enchanting.

The dining-room I papered in light sand that toned with the oak, and to this I added plain coral hangings made of unbleached muslin dyed by my laundress. (No colors dye so easily as pinkish or brickish reds. But, whatever you do, *don't* attempt any of the purples.)

The pseudo-mahogany was put upstairs in a grayish green

room with a little twenty-five-cent diaper-print cotton in orange, red, violet, and blue-green. Of course, so many things went into the attic that the house was fairly bare. But it was amazing how little was spent in comparison with the effect produced. And as we had the house on a three-year lease, the addition to each year's rent was less than fifty dollars—and the landlord offered me $500 to cancel my three-year lease!!

As nearly as I can remember, all the papering and painting of the rooms upstairs came to about sixty dollars. The living-room chintz was a re-block at 50 cents a yard—thirty-five yards—and cost seventeen dollars and a half. Cotton print to neutralize the pseudo-mahogany in the room I took for myself was twenty-five cents—ten yards, two dollars and fifty cents. The other two rooms, as well as those I made no attempt to do over, had ruffled curtains at a dollar a pair. I made the shades for five lamps of light-colored manila paper, with cut-out applications of chintz and pictures cut from frontispieces of magazines fitted over three white glass globes bought in the village and two wire frames found in the attic. (I shellacked them, of course, to keep them stiff and smoothly round.)

This house was done solely for effect, but with the exception of the lamp-shades, which were rather makeshift, and the fact that the paper in the bedrooms faded out—in doing it over again I should buy sun-proof papers—the embellishment was satisfactorily permanent.

THE HARDEST PROBLEM IN COLOR ARRANGEMENT

The hardest problem of this sort that I ever attempted to solve was the drawing-room of a certain New York apartment. The architect—who had the most perfect color sense of any one I ever knew—had completed the interior architecture, including the color of the walls, before I arrived on the scene, and on no account would I have asked him to alter whatever it might be. But I must say I stood aghast in the middle of that empty room, lovely in its size and paneled

detail, but with the sun blazing in each of its five windows on highly polished pinkish-pumpkin-copperish walls!! How to quiet it? As a color it was as beautiful as it was amazing, but as a room—! How to put anything with it, was no small problem. Of course, I turned to the triad at once, but it was of no use; neither were any other formulas that I have ever heard of. It resolved itself into a problem of the eye.

Each day I tried samples of color in every sort of material; the room destroyed each, and each destroyed the room. Even the architect was helpless. In fact, he had decided to treat the walls with buttermilk to fade them, when quite by chance I hung up a length of flame-vermilion taffeta, a color so much brighter than the walls that they went back quietly where they belonged. So curtains of taffeta were the beginning. After that I found a red-orange brocade for a small sofa, and an old Sung roof-horse in orange and emerald solved the rest of it. I grayed the emerald for upholstery and found that the room accepted old Sheraton furniture, English portraits, Lowestoft and Chinese porcelain, as well as beautiful book-bindings. And in the end the color of the walls was a great success. But I can't explain the colors that proved harmonious according to any chart. If it were called a red-orange-yellow family, that would do; but then blue should be the complement, not green. Or if it was a triad, it should have included violet, whereas a pitching ship to a bad sailor would be calm by comparison with the effect that violet or blue or bright yellow—and, of course, crimson—had upon it.

A bedroom in this same apartment was also not quite a triad, but it was very easy to do. According to the charts, it should belong to the red-yellow family, with the complements made of green-blue instead of blue. But the complement, in this case, is the principal color instead of the accent, since the entire wall is green-blue. The next color in importance is lemon-yellow, which is the color of the taffeta of the bed and window curtains. The chintz is bluish-green—which is where the chart goes distinctly sideways—with a bird, tree-branch, and flower design of orange flame, light orange,

cream, browns, grays, and an accent of blue. The furniture is apple wood.

In attempting to explain the tendency of one triad corner to move a degree nearer to the other two, I can only say that I have noted it many times—though I have never heard its chart explanation, and therefore hesitate to offer it as a rule. But it would seem safe to say that a closely adjoining color within the family circle of one point of a triad may be substituted or included. This may explain the becomingness of orange-red with orange—though it does not explain the hideosity of violet and blue in the drawing-room problem described above

THE SPLIT COMPLEMENT—A TRIAD THAT WAS OMITTED

There is also a certain triangle of color that was purposely omitted from the charts, because, when this triangle is harmonious, its short side indicates two parents in one family, and its two long sides point to their "split complements," opposite. For instance, green and yellow, with red-violet. Or violet and red with yellow-green. Or violet and blue with yellow-orange. When it indicates a triangle of discord, its points indicate the colors on either side of a family barrier, with the split complement opposite them.

In these triads you usually make the two related colors dominate the complement, but you can equally well place them the other way round—which is the way I used green-blue in the bedroom just described. In other words, the room is not red-orange and yellow with an accent of blue-green; it is a blue-green room in which there is much pale yellow, and an accent of orange and orange-red.

Of course, we can never know whether the vibrations which manifest themselves as color are to any two of us the same. Is that which A finds beautiful and B finds ugly presented in identical vibrations to the mind of each? Or is B's vibration-receiving station slower than A's, and the message received quite different? Who knows?

COLOR AS A BACKGROUND OF PERSONAL BECOMINGNESS

Another aspect of color which should be considered by every house-owner who has an atom of personal vanity—or by those who love her, even if she herself has no such pride—is the choosing of color as a background of personal becomingness.

Although the concern of this book is with the beauty of a house and not with the beauty of its owner, it would be incomplete without suggesting that a woman should choose surroundings that are becoming, rather than thoughtlessly spend her life amidst colors that possibly detract quite actually from her looks. In order, therefore, to consider background colors from the point of view of personal becomingness, let us divide women into three types—blondes, brunettes, and mediums—and divide these three types again into subdivisions. There are, for instance, four types of blondes—the noonday blonde, the moon blonde, the drab blonde, and the red-haired blonde.

BACKGROUNDS FOR BLONDES

The noonday blonde is she who has white skin, golden hair, brilliant cream-and-coral coloring; she is the "woman beautiful" as established by the Greeks when they set up their temples to golden-blonde Aphrodite. One's first thought of her is that nothing can be either taken from or added to her glorious radiance. And yet one danger threatens her: the vulgarity of too much gilding. Just as she must be careful to stay slim or she will become too full-blown, she must choose surroundings of distinction and simplicity or she will make them as well as herself look tawdry.

Therefore, she must assiduously avoid robin's-egg blue; true, this is usually her favorite color, but it exaggerates rather than becomes her. Grays, taupes, gray-blues, very gray yellow-greens, and certain rather pallid yellows are all becoming. But, above all, she must be surrounded by fineness

of detail. You see, she is herself so colorful that one degree beyond restraint—unless she is thin to attenuation, as we imagined our exotic beauty to be when we designed her boudoir—puts her over the edge where the peony becomes a cabbage. A room such as our first portrait interior does not express a noonday blonde at all, and yet the conventionality of such a background would give quality to her beauty, and her beauty would illumine such a room.

The perfect example of a moon blonde is one whose coloring is porcelain fine, but so pallid that she should be surrounded by every color that enhances her own—robin's-egg blue at high light, apple-green, white, black and steel with emerald and lemon. But she must avoid strong values, which would wash her out. Feminine rooms suit her—French ones and certain very modified modern ones that are carried out in pale blues or greens or mauves and silver. Colonial, French, or not too imposing Georgian houses suit her best; or very little cottages furnished fragilely. In fact, so feminine should her own surroundings be that her husband should have a plain wood-lined room to counterbalance the rooms that are too obviously hers. But let him not have heavy Tudor or Jacobean furniture if she is to be admitted—ever.

The drab blonde—seemingly qualified by a very unflattering adjective—is really one of the most essentially thoroughbred as well as the most natural of women. She fits into the sort of house that a man likes with the suitability of a boy. She fits into the most elaborate house with the suitability of race; and, being devoid of affectation, she generally contrives a background more or less in monotone, but with homelike qualities that attract. A pine room with gay but small-patterned chintz, a room with red in it, or orange or yellow, is far more becoming to her than green or mauve or blue. At night a deep cream-colored wall with curtains of yellow—or better still, a background of dark wood and crimson brocade.

In this day of jazzed color—no less than jazzed music—the young woman whose hair is red has come into her own,

since few other colorings are accentuated enough in themselves to be put in the center of decorative interest. Belonging to the red-orange-copper family, her discord is red, violet, mulberry, or bluish crimson.

BACKGROUND FOR BRUNETTES

Brunettes are divided into two classes: those with white skins and blue eyes, those with dark skins and brown eyes. Let us say that there are no colorless brunettes, since lip-stick is used freely by all and rouge by those whom it embellishes. To the dark-haired, fair-skinned, blue-eyed Irish type, all colors are equally becoming. But in designing the living-room of her house, let its color include blue, and let there be a high-backed chair or a cushion of blue—slightly deeper than the shade of her eyes—against which she leans her head.

To the Irish brunette, who in her youth has skin like nothing so much as snow and watermelon-ice, with eyes that are blue, blue-gray or blue-violet, almost all colors are suitable; there is no color that does not suit her, in fact, except those that are thickly mixed. She should keep the water-ice transparency in mind. Orchid is more becoming to her than salmon, apple-green than olive; she is loveliest of all, perhaps, in a white room with blue hangings, in the presence of brilliant flowers with outstanding masses of watermelon-pink. She is one of the few who are beautiful against a wall or curtain of apple-green. It will turn her eyes from blue to blue-green, but be otherwise becoming. She can stand magenta, too. In fact, she can triumph over colors that despoil nearly every other type.

The true brunette looks at her very best in the entire range of reds and yellows—plainly the reason for the constant use of these colors in Spain. A woman with black hair and dark skin should never be seen far from some shade of yellow-red or red-yellow. Let her on no account do a room in blue, blue-green or violet, and let her avoid the smart modern room of black and gray. Very yellow green to which are

added the tones of russet red would be becoming—very. Instead of attempting triads, she must follow the scale of yellow and avoid tones of color in which yellow is absent.

EMBELLISHING BACKGROUNDS FOR WOMEN OF FADING BEAUTY

For those who are young and beautiful, selecting a becoming background is—except within certain marked types, as noted—not important. But when one grows older, choice of becomingness is essential. A woman whose skin is inclined to be at all red should avoid green as she would the plague. The best color for a woman whose face is florid is red, since red is inclined to make lighter red pallid.

A proverb has it that "yellow next to yellow makes yellow look white." The right yellow, yes. The wrong yellow, decidedly no. A sallow skin surrounded by tan is as bad as the mud-and-mustard formula. But sallow coloring next to pinkish orange, or to the red that has a strong accent of terra cotta, looks its very best.

The problems of the roan-haired period, meaning that period of middle-aged beauty-doldrums through which all light and medium shades of hair must fade, are best answered by backgrounds in pastel shades that have a slight amount of yellow in their mixture. The ugliness of roan hair is that it is not steel-gray but mousy-yellow. Put next to steel or to pure white it looks its worst; therefore the present use of steel in modern furnishing should by the roan-haired be avoided.

All the colors shown in the spokes of the color chart are becoming to women whose skins are fading. Other softening backgrounds that are becoming to nearly all women whose coloring is not as young as it used to be, are old ivory or yellowed cream paneling, outlined with rubbed-off gold; gray paneling that is yellower than the tone of her hair; gray-violet, French blue, periwinkle blue, ashes of roses, brownish raspberry, and old Italian red.

Old Italian red, noted as the most becoming background

possible in an opera house, is likewise the most becoming background possible where an effect of dignity and brilliance is the object. Women's clothes, no less than their complexions, are beautiful against it; even men's tail-coats acquire distinction. It is necessarily a color that exacts evening dress and, if possible, much candle-light.

In choosing her own most becoming background, the woman of taste is merely a stage director who skilfully presents—herself. The object of these pages is not so much to tell you what color of room is becoming to you, as merely to attract your attention to a point that may very easily be overlooked. Other things being equal, why not look your best at home, where you are seen every day by those you love most, rather than think of your appearance solely when you choose a street or party dress?

THE EFFECT OF SELF-EXPRESSING HUES ON TEMPERAMENT

Let us say that you are a somewhat restless, overenthusiastic, excitement-loving person, and that the color you like best—as well as the one that expresses you—is orange-red. The question we now confront is whether you should be surrounded by the perpetual stimulant of red, or should be grayed or quieted by the influence of blue or neutral tones instead. In other words, being yourself overcolorful by temperament, could you increase your own tendencies to the point where nervous breakdown threatens? Or could you find restfulness in other surroundings?

On the other hand, if you are very reserved—purposely, perhaps, or possibly inarticulate by nature—would gray or gray-blue-violet increase your innate aloofness? Would you be more relaxed in a room of yellow or rose? This is included because the answer is part of the theory of color, and at least you can think about it! My own opinion is quite beside the point, but such as it is I include it also. Personally I believe in matching, rather than complementing, your background; that is, if you happen to care really very much about color

in the first place. If you do not, then it is a good idea to use complementary colors for your background. But, if you are depressed or annoyed by the color that should correct your own tendencies, you would certainly be lacking in ordinary common sense to be governed by the theories of other people in the matter.

SELECTING COLOR ACCORDING TO SITUATION

According to the typical interior decorator, yellow, which is the substitute for sunlight, should always be chosen for north rooms. Reds and oranges are warming, and therefore should be chosen for cold climates and for half-north-light rooms. Cold blues, violets, grays, and blue-greens are for the hot climates and rooms facing south.

These conventional rules are good to know, but good also to *break,* if you prefer, since choice of color for situation depends entirely upon whether you like an effect of light that is evened or prefer a contrast.

Personally, I like a bright room in the sun, a cool one in the shade. If I feel a need of the sun, then I like lots of it. Yellows, reds, and creams are a hundred times more beautiful in the sun, of which they are symbols, than they ever can be in the shade. And what is so restful, when the heat and glare of the sun become a nether-world torture, as a cool gray-blue room facing the cool gray-blue north? These sentences express my opinion. But my opinion is of no concern whatever in any detail of your house.

The color of *my house* is suitable if it delights and expresses me; *your house,* to be perfect, must delight and express *not your decorator, but you.* If its color is becoming as a background to your looks, if it is suitable to your use, if you find it restful when you are tired, if you find it soothing when you are ill, if it satisfies your need of beauty and that of your family, then you have achieved a personal scheme of harmony that supremely fulfils its every requirement.

XIII

THE PERIOD STYLES

LIKE the forms of classic architecture and the theory of color harmony, the Period Styles, although threadbare to students, may perhaps be of interest to those who do not happen to know their history. It may be well, therefore, to explain the very simple story of how and why the styles of this or that period came into being, and why we are still making use of some of them.

Their origin goes back to ancient days, when countries and even localities were segregated from each other by distances impracticable for travel, let alone for the hauling of building material. Each locality was dependent, therefore, upon its own resources. The wood or stone or clay which happened to be near at hand was naturally chosen for the construction of dwellings, and practise in the handling of this material or that, gradually suggested the most practical method for its use. Plans and details were furthermore developed as civilization progressed. Wattled huts were replaced by houses of logs hewn and lashed or mitred together. Clay that had been daubed on to fill the openings between branches was made into mortar to hold stones together, or shaped into bricks and sunbaked; or rock was split and squared into blocks that could be laid securely one above the other.

Gradually dwellings, influenced by climate and personal taste, as well as by the needs of the people of this or that locality, followed certain definite forms or styles. Communities that needed protection from the cold or from hostile neighbors, or from dangerous animals, built closed-in shelters or strongholds. Other communities that dwelt in mild climates amidst friendly surroundings and great beauty of nature were encouraged in the creation of beauty them-

selves, and that was the beginning of Art, which is, after all, the creation of beauty by man. Naturally, the taste and dexterity of one community exceeded that of another, and visiting neighbors, noting the beauty that had been achieved, borrowed such ideas as were suitable to themselves; and others, in turn, borrowed from them. Little by little, those communities which developed the highest excellence began to be looked up to and to be talked about, and travelers came from afar to admire their achievements and study their methods. It was in this way exactly that the civilized world went on artistic pilgrimages to Athens, to Rome, to Florence, to France, to China or otherwhere.

ART THAT STANDS THE TEST OF TIME

Why do the creations of one people endure, while those of another are discarded? Because they stand the test of time, which inevitably chooses that the fittest shall survive. In every age, new ideas are expressed in new forms, designs, textures and colors, and are temporarily accepted as useful or beautiful; but when these are subjected to the immutable test of time, most of them fall by the wayside and only the best and truest survive. And that which endures becomes a standard of beauty; that which fails to endure is usually classified as having been of little worth—unless it is from time to time revived.

It is perhaps not safe to make a definite statement that the excellence of an object which is chosen for the second time after a long interim is thereby established, but it is at all events not unreasonable to declare that those things which are rechosen cool-headedly after their emotional furore is past, are more likely to be enduringly good than the great majority of objects of a new style in the high tide of its vogue.

Barring certain recurrent fads such as the present mania for kitchen antiques, or for modern Tut-ankh-Amen replicas—which must be classified as very distinctly rage-af-

fected—our belief in the beauty of that which has been selected generation after generation, and age after age, leaves little room for doubt as to its intrinsic worth. All of which is a roundabout way of saying that our belief in the beauty of the Taj Mahal of India, the Parthenon of Greece, the Cathedral of Burgos in Spain, the Elizabethan manor, Montacute, in England; the Maxfield Parrish beauty of Carcassonne in France, or any one of the hundreds of supreme examples of architecture, as well as tens of thousands of objects of interior embellishment, is founded upon established principles of taste and judgment—supplemented by the test of time.

HOW STYLES ARE SHAPED

Present-day styles, meaning those of latest and untested creation, always appeal to the large class of people who are attracted by whatever is new. But over against these lovers of mere newness stand those conservatives who find it difficult to endure any form of innovation. Without the first group we should never have the infusion of fresh elements, which are as necessary to the vitality of Art as fresh water is to an aquarium; without the other group there would be no check upon what might easily become an incurable epidemic of tasteless novelty.

It is, in fact, the balance between these two forces that shapes the course of Art. The cool-headed, conservative element, seeing that public sentiment is bent upon new Art—whatever its momentary expression may be—selects whatever may be capable of development, or uses the lever of its judgment to dislodge that which is completely bad.

(Our present Modern decorative art craze will be discussed in its own chapter.)

THE BEAUTY OF THE WORLD TO CHOOSE FROM

In contrast to the people of this or that Period of long age, whose choice was limited to the artistic accomplishments

of their nearest neighbors, we of to-day can make our choice from the whole range of examples that thousands of years of esthetic endeavor in all the nations of the world have been able to produce.

Suitability to use and appeal to good taste are the sole requirements in making our choice. Suitability to use includes suitability to situation, and under this head we must consider, in turn, harmony of aspect, durability, comfort, and protection. If these qualities be present, there is no reason why we should omit beauty in whatever form we find it and whatever its source, whether this be near by or in some distant country—such, for instance, as those of the far East, whose culture had reached a point of highest rank thousands of years before the white-skinned people of the earth had emerged from a state of primitive savagery.

We do, as a matter of fact, choose many beautiful objects from Japan, India, and China, though we have rarely, if ever—as yet—built a completely Eastern house; but that is only because Eastern modes of life differ too much from ours to make their houses or their furnishings comfortable for us. We have not chosen to erect fragile, one-storied houses with paper walls, such as they build in Japan, charming though they are to look at, especially when surrounded by an entrancing rock-garden; but this is merely for the utilitarian reason that they would be incompatible with the proper installation of our plumbing, steam-heating and electricity, to say nothing of the fire laws! Moreover, we prefer to wear our shoes in the house, to sit on chairs, and to warm ourselves at fires instead of putting on an extra half-dozen of wadded kimonos. But there is no reason why we should not—and quite suitably—build a Chinese house, especially now, when the influence of Chinese art dominates the best motifs of the present Modern style. One should say "*again* dominates," because Western appreciation of Chinese form, texture, and color rises every so often in a tide of enthusiasm. Not only was Chinese influence manifest throughout the eighteenth century in France and in England, but the influ-

ence of China would seem to have been marked in the inner court-gardens of all the ancient peoples of the Mediterranean borderlands, no less than in certain sculptural forms of Greece. Perhaps the small-headed, arch-necked horses of the Parthenon frieze, which we know as Classic, received their Classic outline from the roof-tile horses of China! Their similarity, at all events, is striking, and the Chinese prototype antedates the Greek by more than a thousand years.

THE RIGHT WAY TO CHOOSE

We should consider an object of beauty, no matter what its style, exactly as we consider an object displayed in a shop-window or on a page of advertising. The only sensible and sane way to choose any of our belongings is to pick out each item either because it delights us or because we have need of it—or both.

To select a house, a chair or a table because it is tagged "Cinque-Cento," "Elizabethan" or "François I" is exactly like buying a hat or a dress because of the name sewed into the lining! If it is an object of beauty, and suitable for the place where we intend to put it, what earthly difference does it make what its name is? This is not meant as an objection to knowing its name or recognizing its style, but is a protest against judging it solely by label, instead of appraising its value according to the evidence of its merit.

THE LABEL READERS

Appreciation is a thousand miles ahead of label-reading, or even of label-memory, and the way to cultivate it is to discover the beauty of an object first, and then find out afterwards what it is. If you mistake a piece of paste for a gem—or overlook a gem—the cultivating thing to do is not, even then, to memorize the genuine label, but to find out, if you can, what it was that made you like the counterfeit, and why it was that you missed the real gem, and thus,

through knowledge and practise, to become acquainted with the subtle details that distinguish the good from the bad. If those whose habit it is to concentrate on labels will only learn to recognize beauty of form and of texture and of color, and thereby learn to separate that which is an expression of art from that which is an expression of utter ignorance, they will have taken a long step in the right direction!

To know the name of something is useful—at times even essential. It is simpler, for instance, to tell a salesman, "I would like a Spanish vargueño," or "I would like a Sheraton sideboard," than to say, "I want something for a house."

The point to bear in mind is merely this: There are a thousand label readers to every one person of uninfluenced knowledge or taste, and it is this one, and not the nine hundred and ninety-nine others, who achieves a house of beautifully assembled personality instead of a tagged collection of unimaginatively assembled monotony. If you see an Italian or Spanish or English or any other sort of desk that you think would look well in your house—then choose it!

The only object in knowing about the styles that were evolved at certain times and in certain places is that knowledge of every sort is always an advantage. But knowledge that has been digested by means of thought and understanding and appreciation, is of greater advantage still.

The following sections, each devoted to a different period or style, are therefore intended to point out a few of the details that contribute to their charm (or the contrary), instead of emphasizing chronological history. In other words, our sole concern is with houses or objects that have qualities of beauty in contrast to those which are despoiling. For every reason, therefore, let us begin with the Spanish style.

1. THE SPANISH HOUSE

In the first place, it is suitable to put at the head of our list of styles the house that belongs to our own oldest period

of Colonial; a house that was not of English descent, built by the colonists at Jamestown and Plymouth, but one that came to us out of Spain, with something of Aztec and Indian origin added, through much earlier settlers—in New Mexico and California—who were Spanish.

In the second place, the subject of Spanish-American architecture and furnishing is one to be especially emphasized because no other style is so extreme in its contradiction of beauty and hideosity, of virtue and villainy. On one side the Spanish house of true type has beauty such as is possible to no other order of building, because the spirit of its creation is the spirit of Romance. On the other hand, the house that is sometimes labeled "Spanish" can be the most tawdry exposition of pretentiousness possible to perpetrate.

THE CHARM OF MYSTERY

Spanish houses of greatest beauty are like persons of quality, in that they do not proclaim their personal affairs nor parade their possessions in public. Moreover, the revelation of their charm of personality is reserved for those who, through ties of family or friendship, are admitted to the inner rooms and walled enclosures.

It is for this reason that the Spanish house of quality flaunts no attention-attracting ornamentation to the passer-by, gives no inkling of its character, its intentions or its possession. On the street side the façade is of white-washed stone or stucco, unbroken on its lower floor save by occasional windows, small in size and heavily shuttered, latticed, or grilled; from the vantage-ground of which those within may look out, but through which those without may glimpse no detail within.

Because of its mystery, the charm of this type of Spanish house is as tantalizing as the fleeting glimpse on an upper balcony of its own Castilian or Andalusian beauties, whose dark eyes gleam above their fans held in slim jeweled fingers. The allure of mystery and romance belongs, moreover, to the

Firm of Kenneth M. Murchison, Architects

GENUINELY BEAUTIFUL SPANISH FURNISHING: THE AUBUSSON RUG, MADE FOR A GRANDEE OF SPAIN, HAS A WINE-RED GROUND WITH BRILLIANTLY COLORED DESIGN

[PLATE 22]

Walker & Gillette, Architects

EVERY POSSIBILITY OF BEAUTY IS EXPRESSED IN THIS ITALIAN ENTRANCE TO A PALATIAL HOUSE

[PLATE 23]

Old Spanish house alone. Cold Northern blank-walled buildings are just that—and the reason for their unresponsiveness leaves one incurious. But low rambling Spanish walls that encircle gardens—the telltale trees and vines of which escape here and there above a coping—have all the allure of a shut-in paradise.

This is why it is just about as suitable to tack the label "Spanish" on a commonplace, vulgar, white or pink or blue or yellow pile of chunky, topless squares, perched upon a bleak plot of unfenced land, with windows on all sides open to the ground, as it would be to build an adobe pueblo dwelling, trim its parapet with a Greek cornice, stand some Greek or Roman columns against the front of it, and call it "Colonial."

The rules governing Spanish architecture, of course, have plenty of contradictory exceptions. If one happens, for instance, to dislike the suggestion of living in walled seclusion, one may with propriety and with best taste interpret the Spanish style as one pleases, so long as its quality of reserve be not lost. The result could be any plain-walled building with a beautiful doorway and deep-set windows with spool-turned spindles covering a casement that opens inward. It might even be something suggestive of plantation architecture, in that it could have wide second-story verandas and its roof-tiles laid shingle-flat.

Beautiful Spanish houses are always those which are simple in effect and low in proportion to their widespread area. Most ugly are those closely bunched together, like a handful of a child's building blocks surmounted with heavy red-squared Chinese coolie's hat-brims; equally bad is the house of great pretense that looks like a semi-Venetian casino with rococo trimming, Venetian Gothic-arched windows, Italian balustrade, or ornament in stucco work copied—in full size—from the wall of a church ten times the dimensions of the wall or door-frame it is made to decorate.

Other bad examples are those with bulbous bulges of the walls and great buttress-like thickenings of the base, and

with parapets that form wavy top pieces. Some of the New Mexican houses, which are modeled after the pueblos of the Indians, look much better in their own environment than pictures of them suggest, because they fit in with their desert setting. Otherwise the unornamented parapet of a roofless house is apt to give the appearance of a jar without a top.

The beauty of the Spanish roof depends upon the quality of its tiles, which can have indescribable beauty of color when produced by blendings of yellowish-pinkish-grayish-burnt orange and faded brick. Moreover, their colors are as dependent upon softness and irregularity of texture as upon pigments.

GALLERIES

Galleries play an important part. Little ones on the outside above the entrance, or at one side, or on both sides. On the patio side long arcades or galleries often take the place of the upstairs hall, allowing bedrooms to open through two sides of the house. Generally there is an arcade on the first floor also serving as a hallway, supporting the colonnaded balcony above it. Wrought iron is often used, but spool-turned balustrades of wood are equally if not more in character.

SPANISH DOORWAYS

Whether good or bad, the doorways certainly run to extremes. One type is anchorite-plain and fortress-solid; another type is as decorated as a birthday cake. The embellishment of doorways and windows in great blank wall-spaces was the dominant feature of Spanish Renaissance. Sometimes the design in high-relief stucco rises in pinnacles higher than the walls of the façades. Sometimes, when the door is low, a cartouche is placed over it; at other times the door is surmounted by an elaborate lintel, supported on columns or ornamented side-posts, with perhaps a balcony and window over it.

UNSUITABLE TO A COLD CLIMATE

The reason why the Spanish house does not belong in a northern climate is that the purpose of its design is protection against the tropical heat and dazzling sun. In less brilliant light the thickness of the walls produces an interior of dungeon-darkness and chill; moreover, the use of open galleries instead of corridors, with the featuring of a purposely shaded courtyard as the chief living-room of the house, has little appeal under cloudy skies, and none at all in a good hard downpour.

And yet, with a moderate amount of ingenuity, especially if one has a generously filled purse, a house of Spanish character could easily be adapted to the northern climate. The patio, if big enough to cast comparatively little shade, could have a glassed-in, steam-heated conservatory garden on its southern side, filled with vines and winter-blooming flowers. There would be a fountain, of course, and a small swimming plunge, perhaps; and the uncovered part of the patio would be beautified throughout the year by a thick planting of evergreens. But unless it is a question of housing a Spanish collection or of suiting a family of Spanish descent, one would do well to think twice before facing the necessity of overcoming liabilities which in more suitable environments are the outstanding assets of the Spanish style.

ABUSE OF THE PATIO

The patio is an inner courtyard garden completely surrounded by the rooms or galleries of the house, supplemented when necessary by high walls, and is a direct descendant of the atrium or peristylium of ancient Rome and Greece. In Southern California, Florida, and other localities where adaptations of the Spanish house predominate, the patio, as often as not, is enclosed on three sides only. The original intention of the patio was a secluded outdoor living-room for the use of the family. Its surrounding walls insured complete

privacy, and, furthermore, insured shade on one side of it or another at every hour of the day.

But, whichever its form, the possibilities of its beauty and enrichment have been realized by an amazingly small percentage of those whose houses include them. Too often an American attempt at a patio looks like a factory-exhibit of tiles, or a home for incurable feather-duster palms and scrubby little plants in cluttering flower-pots, with not a plant or vine or tree of luxuriance in the whole enclosure; it might be called a courtyard, a clothes-yard, a ceramic compound, or a feather-duster alley, but it cannot—unless one intends to be sarcastic—be called a patio!

THE PATIO OF PERFECTION

Too small an enclosure that is nothing more than a roofless vestibule or small yard defeats the object of the patio, which is meant to serve as a cool and pleasant living-room where the down-slanting breezes may blow through a wide-open space. Too large a patio, on the other hand, loses its living-room quality.

The principal area of the patio should be paved with tiles —preferably unornamented—or with broken flagstones, or with herring-bone-laid bricks. In any case, there should be left wide earth openings in the corners or at intervals against the building or gallery walls for planting.

In patios of size, the tiles or flagstones are taken up at effective distances, and trees or shrubbery or flower-beds are set in. Every patio has a fountain—which can be a feature of entrancing beauty, especially when the water descends by means of spills into a pool deep enough for a plunge. At one side there should be an unplanted space of at least small-room size, protected by an awning that can be let down for shade or in case of rain, and this space furnished as a living-room. But the surrounding distances of the patio should be treated as a garden. Galleries should be twined with vines, and the beautiful flowers of the tropics should be planted in profu-

sion—oleanders, camilla trees, hibiscus, myrtle, bougainvillea, and roses growing as high as one's head.

The possibilities in awning-sheltered flower-bedecked fountain-embellished gardens are so rich and varied that the ugliness of a bare, uninviting enclosure becomes doubly disappointing if such chance for beauty be wantonly—or ignorantly—thrown away!

THE SPANISH INTERIOR AND ITS FURNITURE

An outstanding quality of a good Spanish interior and its furniture is an effect of hand-made softness of the carving and surfaces of the wood. Such an interior may quite well be almost bare, but its few objects have individual character and are beautifully mannered in their consideration of each other. Walls of tin hardness are hideous, as are equally those which are lumpy or scratched. Those streaked and smeared with colors and cobwebs are simply unspeakable and need not be discussed.

There should be the same softening of the plaster edges of a door-opening that there is in the surface of a hand-hewn beam. There is seldom any trim, and only such necessary doors as those that lead outside or into the service wings or bedrooms. The walls are nearly always plastered white or cream. Heavy wooden beams of the ceiling are supported on posts or columns, at the top of which brackets, called zapatos, are often fitted, filling the angles between the columns and the beams that they support, and making a very simple but effective ornamentation. The spaces between the beams are plastered or filled with strips or twigs of wood, herring-boned or set in some other straight-lined or right-angled pattern.

Whatever wood there may be is embellished with "line-work" or "flat-work" carving that follows a herring-bone design, or one of match-sticks laid in little groups, first this way and then that; or perhaps it follows an outstanding design which suggests a pattern that might be notched by

the drawing of a rounded knife-blade with little jabs across the smoothed surface of mashed potato.

FLOORS

The floors are sometimes of wood, but more usually of tile, either figured or plain. Figured floors, whether of tiles or covered with rugs, belong in the eye-hitting category—so be careful! Because the Spanish used rugs made by every country to which they sailed, the rugs suitable to a Spanish house are unlimited in variety. Most effective, of course, are those with colorful heraldic devices, figures of people and animals, and every sort of floral pattern.

Bold use of brilliant color on the floor must be carefully adjusted to a repetition of its keynote elsewhere. But fixed rules can not be made. Ordinarily two challenging masses antagonize each other. A gorgeous rug, gorgeous embroideries, elaborately decorated leather and tiles—a combination of these is apt to be frightful, and yet it can be beautiful. The rule of safety is that if figured tiles or embroideries or tapestries are to be put on the walls, the floor covering would better be plain.

In the dining-room shown in Plate 22, in which the furniture is Spanish, the outstanding color is in the Aubusson rug. This rug was especially designed for a palace in Spain, and its color is wine-red, cream, yellow, green, and rose. The walls are cream, the furniture soft brown; the hangings of old damask exactly match the wine-red of the rug. The quality of every item contributes its utmost to a result which is as appealing as it is in perfect taste—and this in spite of the not at all Spanish setting of an average apartment interior.

COLOR AND ARRANGEMENT

The most effective arrangement of a Spanish room is to put a magnificent embellishment on one wall—a tapestry or a painting, or a hanging of brocade with a mirror over it, as

Fig. 55
SIMPLE SPANISH TABLE

in the dining-room just described, and under it place a sofa or a table or other low piece of furniture. Place a desk against another wall, a leather or velvet-covered, trunk-shaped chest under another hanging. Stand a long table against another wall, with a mirror or painting over it, add a few chairs, and the room is finished. A piece of embroidery is hanging over a balcony, high up on one wall, perhaps, or there is a splash or two of vividly colorful flowers in big jars of glass or pottery or copper.

And yet the furnishing of a Spanish house is far from easy. You can find a thousand examples of vulgar Spanish furniture for each single item of herring-bone or knife-notched carving—properly called flat-work—or for each bit of wood of mellow surface, or each set of proper brace-irons made for support and not for spiraled ornamentation. (Fig. 55.)

The one great difficulty for the unknowing is that while good Spanish furnishings are invariably expensive, expensive Spanish furnishings are by no means invariably good. For one thing, furniture, and in fact the entire interior of the Spanish house, must give the impression of being hand-made. Of course, all beautiful furniture of other styles should be hand-finished—and therefore is liable to be prohibitively expensive. But Spanish furniture is different. It need not be *fine*—it can, in fact, be quite crude; but its wood-carving and even its structure must not suggest the precision of a machine.

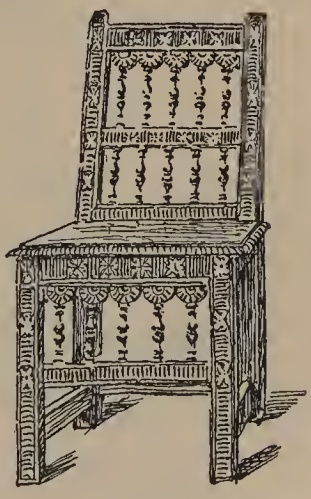


Fig. 56
ORNATE SPANISH CHAIR

Happily there is much good Spanish furniture that is entirely within the ability of an average craftsman to reproduce. By this I do not mean that the more elaborate varieties of furniture, such as the inlays and flat-work of Spanish vargueños—drop-front desks that are fitted on the interior with a solid checker-board of small drawers, the face of each carved or inlaid—can be made by the nearest carpenter! Far from it. But merely that it has been within my

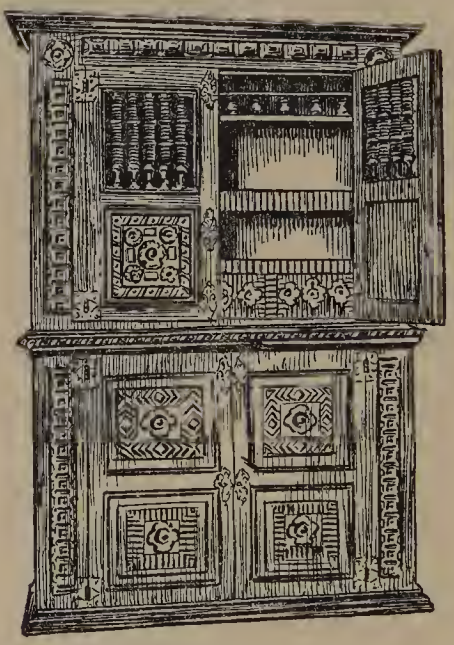


Fig. 57
BEAUTIFUL SPANISH CHEST

personal experience to prove that, given a good design and some timbers of old, seasoned walnut or other wood, any skilled carpenter who is anything of a cabinet-maker can make many varieties of Spanish furniture that are pleasing and satisfactory. Not alone the table (Fig. 55), but even the chest (Fig. 57) and the chair (Fig. 58) can be copied in proportion and outline—with as much or little ornament as may be practicable.

Leathers and stuffs and embroideries are not so easily substituted. There is a quality belonging to old velvets and brocades that is difficult to imitate. At all events, the worst

possible interior to describe is the one with rough or streaky-colored pseudo-Spanish walls, hung with gold-gallooned cotton-velvet banners, and curtains embroidered with imitation coats of arms, and hung on double-spear fixtures behind highlighted machine-made furniture!

Admonition to one inclined toward the Spanish or Italian style: Be moderate in the use of oversized Gothic outlines, exaggerated Moorish details, splurgy cartouches, overwrought stucco, crudeness of finish, and massive structural effects that suggest the housing of a hydraulic plant, or at least of a herd of hippopotami.

TILES

If don'ts in the use of tiles were set in electric lights they would not be overemphasized. Variegated tiles stamped —or composed—in mosaic patterns are the favorite trimming of the incautious, and are often used with dire results; so if you must use tiles, be careful! However, if you really like that sort of trimming, there is no reason why you may not frame with tiles the doors or niches or recesses of an otherwise bare room or loggia, or vestibule or hall. They are often decorative set into the treads or the risers of the stairs, and many people like them as dados and as fountain-backs in patios. Nevertheless, it is well to keep in mind that a mixture of tiles indiscriminately used is more apt to look like the Spanish Inn scene of a musical comedy than the abode of a family of cultivation and refinement.

Remember also that good Spanish furniture is carved in continuous bands of shallow cut-work, more suggestive of fancy stitching than of carving, and that, as in all good furniture, the surface and color of the wood count at least sixty if not seventy per cent.

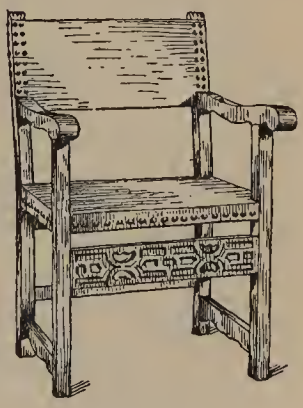


Fig. 58
GOOD EXAMPLE OF SPANISH CHAIR

Tastefully done, no house lends itself to economical beautification more easily than does the Spanish. With very little furniture against its very plain walls, with the patio elaborated to its utmost by means of the dark green foliage of shrubs and trees, and with comfort-inviting furniture and a few splashes of strong color as an especial accent modified by neutral textiles—the various browns of old wood and iron—it *can* be lovely.

2. THE ITALIAN HOUSE

Considering that the Italian Renaissance was at least godmother—if not grandmother—to all the neighborhood Periods of Europe, this greatest Period of art and decoration plays a comparatively small part in our houses of to-day. (Except in its Palladian interpretation, adopted by England and later by us, and noted elsewhere. See Index.) But, defining the house in this section as distinctly Italian in character, we might almost say that in our present enthusiasm for Spanish, English, and Normandy styles—not to mention the modernist monolith that is bearing down upon us with the implacability of a traction engine—one of the best opportunities for a house of personality and charm is being overlooked.

Because certain classic villa examples express the "frozen music" definition of architecture as few other styles can, we are apt to think of the Italian house as having no other personality save that which is imposing and formal. To regard the quality of formality as inseparable from the Italian style is as unthinking as it would be to insist that clouds must unvaryingly be "fleecy" and water be "blue." If clouds are fleecy when they merge into heavy, even blankets of fog; and if water is blue when it is slate-gray or green or silver-surfaced, then perhaps the Italian palace, or villa, or house, is always formal.

The perfectly balanced aspect of an American-Italian villa, set upon a marble-balustraded platform, with stiff,

starched gardens that are geometrically precise, is formal, certainly. A great, block-shaped palace is much more than formal on its exterior. The case of resplendence vs. formality of the interior will be noted presently; at the moment let us merely remark that the informal Italian house can express one of the most homelike dwellings possible to imagine for you or for me—in any neighborhood.

But before considering this latter type of house, we must at least briefly focus our attention on the palaces and villas of the Renaissance, which were the ancestors of the modern house.

ITALIAN SPLENDOR OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

In its most brilliant and forceful manifestation, the fifteenth-century palace is very suggestive of a Kohinoor diamond that most of us look at in a museum display-case with never a thought of becoming its owner. But for the few of us who are buying world-renowned diamonds or duplicating world-renowned palaces, no other Period that we could possibly select lends itself to such colorful magnificence.

At the mention of an Italian palace, we think of floors elaborately designed of varicolored marble; walls unbelievably embellished with paintings and sculpture and frescoes, by the greatest artists the world has known; we think of ceilings no less than walls that are vast panoramas of history or mythology in deeply subdued colors, embellished with enframements of gildings and sculptures and inlays of marbles. We think of rich-colored damask brocades and Genoese velvets.

We think, too, of high relief carving of wood—perhaps finished with a smoothing of *gesso* (hard plaster) in preparation for the painting and gilding that was applied either to walls or to furniture. We think of great chests—some of them with backs and arms. We think of high candlesticks, gilded and carved, and of high corner cupboards and low credenze; we think of refectory tables; all of these paneled

or carved or inlaid or finished in polychrome—or with these embellishments applied to one piece.

We think of severe high-back chairs upholstered in blue, dark red or deep green damask brocades. We think of cross-framed chairs with strapped backs and loose cushions of velvet; we think of chairs with twisted wood spirals and arm-posts terminating in carved figures. We think of tapestries, of course, worth a rich man's fortune; but first and foremost we think of the supremacy of Italian sculpture and painting.

THE MAGIC DIGESTION OF THE RENAISSANCE

Small wonder that such overrichness is more than dangerous for any but an expert to assemble—and that even the expert is likely to fail in producing a quality that might be called the magic digestion of the Renaissance! No rooms intended to be lived in were ever so overpoweringly ornamented as were those in the palaces of the rich nobles of Italy—especially throughout the sixteenth century. And yet, for all their ornament—so lavish as to defy description, even though one copy every synonym for splendor in the dictionary—they were HOMES. They were suitable backgrounds for the great families who lived in them, and who, in many instances, are still living in them.

You can go to-day into many of these supergorgeous apartments, into which modern comforts have been installed, and be made conscious of no overpowering background. To me, this is sheer necromancy—and perhaps, like the Indian rope which hangs down out of empty air, and on which a small boy climbs heavenward—a figment of my own imagination. At all events, I offer the picture as it appears to me.

In the eighteenth century the virile style of the Italian Renaissance went through the phases of baroque decadence and rococo flippancy. It should be added that the term baroque is not necessarily a synonym for decadence, but is merely the name of a style that easily lends itself to decadence

because it is beyond the bounds of classic regularity. It was originally applied by Portuguese jewelers to unevenly shaped pearls, and its meaning is unevenness. Rococo is composed of two French words, *rocaille* and *coquaille*—rocks and shells.

In its best interpretation baroque is an imaginative and picturesque release from the cold restraints of classic form. In other words, it denotes freedom and exuberance of expression. Rococo runs somewhat to the florid and the flippant, but at its best it is gay and youthful. At their worst, both the baroque and rococo—like the little girl with the curl—are "horrid."

Throughout every Period the pendulum of popular taste swings from classic, or regular, to baroque or picturesque. In a house that has what might be called flexibility of charm, an accent of the one should complement the other. A purely classic house, without a human deviation from set regularity, is as unlivable in quality as a tomb or any other memorial edifice. Unrestrained irregularity that "spills all over the place" is equally uninviting because repose is impossible in an atmosphere of restless confusion.

The Palladian influence which was expressed in the Florentine palaces and villas was a direct return to the classic orders, and although of utmost importance to us, belongs—so far as this chapter is concerned—in the sections apportioned to France and to England.

VILLAS

Many of the Palladian villas in Italy were permanent country houses. But curiously paradoxical is the fact that many of those which were built with most chaste formality were retreats to which the nobles, escaping from the gayeties of city life, went with their week-end house-parties to take a rest cure, the régime of which is said to have consisted chiefly in looking at the view, wandering in the pleasure gardens, reading poetry, and leading the sort of life that had been suggested—again it is said—by Boccaccio. The

palaces of Rome and Florence, on the other hand, for all their florid exuberance, were the scenes of purely patriarchal family life. Therefore, had we chosen our pattern fittingly, country life in America would far better have found its example in palaces than in villas.

But since we have made the coldly classic villa the accepted standard for our interpretation of the most gloriously colorful period of history, we might at least see what manner of building this is likely to be.

THE FORMAL TYPE OF ITALIAN HOUSE IN AMERICA

The outstanding features of its exterior include the platform on which the house is placed, and the surrounding gardens—laid out with architectural symmetry—of green-hedged vistas and cypress spires which serve as settings for fountains and sculptures of marble.

The house is either block-shaped or **E**-shaped, directly facing the terrace, which is balustraded in marble and has wide marble stairs descending to the gardens below. An inevitable feature is the loggia overlooking the garden, or commanding a notable view.

A typical Italian house of dignity and distinction would be severely classic and probably white or oyster-gray or cream. Another equally beautiful but less formal type—one that might have walls of very deep cream or sand, and that might quite possibly be warmly embellished on its exterior with frescoes or *scraffito* design—is found in the unusually enchanting example whose hall and stairway are shown in Plate 23.

The interior of such types as this illustration suggests may be appropriately rendered with great elaboration or utmost simplicity of background. Elaboration can go as far as that of the marble and fresco-walled palaces of Venice—rarely, if ever, do they go as far as those of Rome. Usually the walls are left plain, though the ceilings are embellished with woodwork or with plaster or vaulting. The floors are of

marble or tile or stone. But even though the walls be without ornamentation, there must be considerable embellishment in the way of pictures and tapestries and beautiful stuffs, and furniture that is intrinsically good. This is the one demand of the Italian house of importance.

It is true that an Italian house, if it be formal, is in many ways exacting—formality always is! But it is not true that the Italian house of beauty is necessarily a formal one. Neither is it necessary that its gardens be formal—unless its architecture be notably classic. A copy of a villa of definite type would necessitate the garden that belongs to it, since the word villa connotes a house with a garden that matches, exactly as country place denotes a house surrounded by a certain amount of land.

THE INFORMAL ITALIAN HOUSE

This is like any other simple house or low, rambling farm building, with stucco walls and hip-roof, a plain door, plain deep-set windows (less deep-set than those of the Spanish house), and without ornamentation of window or door frames and without grilles.

Such houses as these are far from being formal or exacting, and few houses can be so full of charm. A house such as this might be set in a cottage garden with a space at the front door—or better at a side one—that is flagstoned and shaded by a grape-covered pergola. It looks at its best on a hill with a high wall—making at least part of the boundary of its enclosure—against which vines or trees are trained; but it can equally well be spread on level ground.

One of the loveliest houses in America—judged by its quality of appeal—was a converted stable, barn, shed and chicken-house, with connecting buildings set between. At one side was the shut-in perennial flower-bordered garden, somewhat suggestive of a Spanish patio—only "somewhat" because an awninged loggia took the place of the paved area, and the garden itself had paths of grass. Moreover, since its

location was near New York, there was no tropical planting. The trees were cedars and the flowers those of the hardy garden perennials and biennials.

Such a house may have floors of stone, but they could quite as suitably be of wood. Its ceilings are probably plastered flat, its windows square, a few objects of carving or color shown to advantage against plain plastered walls. An old chest with a priest's vestment hung over it; a double breadth of delphinium blue or bright rose-red brocade or embroidery; a mirror in a Florentine gilt frame. Any variety of Italian chairs, a sofa for comfort, and some colorful stuffs such as the Fortuny cotton prints—or any other materials of foliage or diaper pattern in monochrome of blue or red or green or possibly yellow. Or the walls of a room can be battened for stuffs—as old ones often were—and hung with silks or cottons. Or they can be decorated with an Italian scenic or other wall-paper. A little hall or room papered in the small sheets of hand-blocked paper that are still made in Italy (in Varese, especially) for book-binding and endless decorative purposes, would be very much in character, since these "domino" papers of Italy (so called because they were used to line boxes that held chessmen and dominoes) were the rage in other days. The marble patterns must be shellacked after they are hung, and this treatment improves them all. Covered walls make a more furnished, and therefore homelike room—especially if there be no tapestries or other decorative embellishments—than walls that are white. Ceilings may be left flat and plain; or, if high enough, open beams are suitable, whether left plain or decorated. Vaulted, plastered ceilings, either plain or with ornamented brackets, are ideally suitable if there be sufficient height. Great height with no relief is as bad as overtrimmed lowness.

In other words, if a ceiling is low, it is best to leave it the color of the wall with no dividing cornice line. If walls are moderately high, leave them plain or open-timbered; but if they are very high, they should be either decorated or vaulted.

Taylor & Levi, Architects

THE SORT OF HOUSE THAT APPEALS TO A MAN—FRIENDLY, SUBSTANTIAL, WELCOMING AND HOMELIKE

[PLATE 24]

Office of John Russell Pope, Architect

A LOGGIA THAT IS AS INVITING AS IT IS ARCHITECTURALLY FORMAL

[PLATE 25]

THE SPANISH VS. THE ITALIAN PERSONALITY

Considered according to its inherited tendencies, the allure of the Spanish house is emphasized by its walled-in mystery. To open its doors and windows wide is like tearing the veils from the faces of favorites of the harem, dressing them in Paris clothes, and making them as commonplace as the rest of us.

The Italian palace was a patriarchal stronghold of domestic dignity; the villa was a secluded retreat. The Spanish and Italian houses have many points of resemblance.

The beauty of Spanish furnishing is dependent upon plain wall surfaces—meaning wide spaces between the furniture so that each object can be displayed against an unencumbered background. The placing of Italian furniture is the same.

A gallery-shaped room is especially adapted to Italian furnishing, with windows down a long side, hung with colorful brocade that decorates the otherwise bare plastered walls. An ornate mantel is centered on the wall opposite, with small sofas drawn forward on either side. A chair under a mirror, a sofa under a tapestry, two pictures in two even spaces; no items too close together, no detail out of scale, and no objects moved too far forward from the walls. A long table at the end of the room with two majolica jars made into lamps.

This description sounds like a Spanish room, but its personality should be quite different in the effect of color. The Italian interior, whether palatial or primitive, should be subtle in its harmony. If its walls are white, its hangings emphasize a note of blue. If its walls are cream, its hangings would probably be yellow or yellow-green. If the walls are sand or verging on the brownish (many walls in Italy are actually close to stale chocolate) the hangings would undoubtedly be red. With the color chosen as the dominant one, whatever it may be, there should be blended the grayed colors of its own triad and complement. At its best, one color should be predominant, but not tyrannical.

The Spanish characteristic is one of much stronger accent —a splash of color, red and orange by preference, or any primary or binary hue put close to the contrast of its complement (see Color Chart). In the Spanish house, vivid flowers look best: Solid masses of brilliant yellow with blue, or masses of orange with red—the warm colors generally prevail. In the plain-walled Italian house, flowers can never be too many, but they should be arranged in blended harmonies rather than in strong contrasts.

A WORD OF WARNING TO THOSE LIKELY TO BE LED ASTRAY

Although the Italian house is not at the moment breaking into violences of vulgarity as the Spanish one is on occasions doing, the impulsive buying of oversized and overexuberant

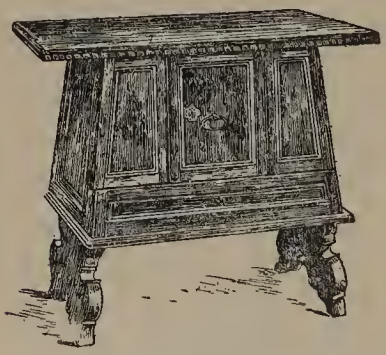


Fig. 59
ITALIAN SIDE STAND

Fig. 60
PRIMITIVE ITALIAN TABLE

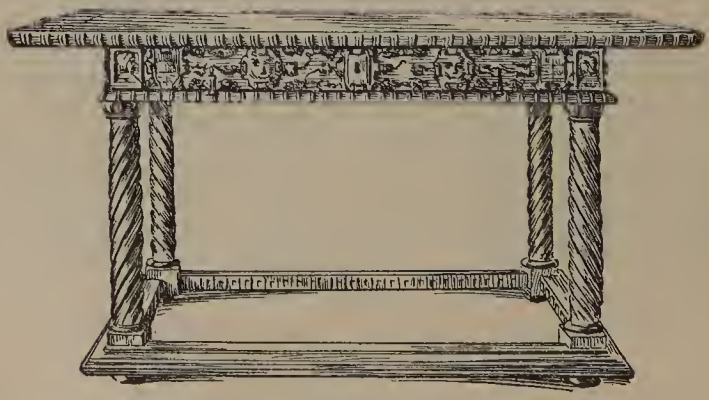


Fig. 61
FLORENTINE RENAISSANCE

examples, which can too easily deteriorate into meaningless scrolls and bulges, is so characteristic of the novice traveler that one who is thinking of going to Italy with any intention of buying objects of art, should make preventive preparations before setting out. The Italian style, as it is encountered in its palaces (and every building one goes into is a palace!), is so colorfully breath-taking in its mellowed magnificence that any one who comes within range of its spell is very apt to lose all sense of proportion, restraint, and taste. And then he or she wonders why bulbous baroque cupids, large-patterned brocades, massive mirror frames—or wall cabinets as ornate as the animal wagons of the circus—give violent indigestion to the living-room at home.

Fig. 62
OPEN-TOP ITALIAN CHEST

Away from home one forgets that the average ceiling built to-day is between eight and nine feet—twelve feet seems almost too high! So one confidently buys a beautiful ceiling that, compared with all the sculpture-embellished others, seems fragilely simple, only to find, when it is put up in the new dining-room at home, that its size and weight give the impression of a giant's waffle-iron pressing down on one's head.

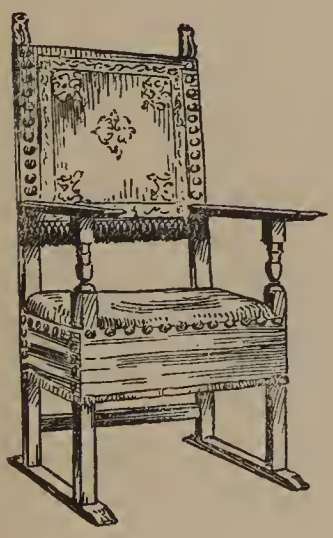


Fig. 63
TYPICAL ITALIAN CHAIR

The rule of safety in furnishing an Italian room, of course, is to put any ornamentation verging on the florid against a blank-walled contrast. The method of danger to the inexpert is the putting of painted carving or otherwise highly embellished furniture against an equally ornamental back-

ground. In fact, this latter procedure is very apt to produce the same effect upon one's senses as eating butter without bread. And yet this dish, as set before us by the Italians, is palatable.

The reason why the old Italian palaces are so unmatchable is that the Italians were—and will ever be—artists by temperament no less than by ceaseless cultivation; and that in all notable examples objects of supreme value were perfectly adjusted in balance, in color, and in scale.

FURNITURE

The pieces which fit best into average American rooms are the smaller, plainer pieces, such as Figures 59 and 60. The table shown in Figure 61 is not so easy to adjust. But the chest (Fig. 62) would go in almost any Italian style of room. The chair (Fig. 63) is simpler when covered with a dull-surfaced damask, but against a plain wall old leather is always good. Cupboards, chests and credenzas that are not too large and not too ornate are excellent in rooms of size, against rather wide wall-spaces.

3. THE FRENCH HOUSE

Periods, as already said, are always the natural expression of need and mood and situation. If our own need or mood or situation duplicates that of an earlier people, then the findings of their experience are of importance to us. We are concerned with the palaces of the Italian Renaissance because their colorful interiors were the first to express the quality of comfort, which is characteristic of our interior furnishings to-day. The Gothic style of France, on the other hand, is not an expression of the American house. But it is impossible to mention the French house and entirely leave out this fundamental Period style which the French of the twelfth century created.

In countries other than France—including our own—

the pinnacles and spires mounting heavenward are symbols of Christian spirituality, and even in France the supreme Gothic examples are those of the cathedrals of Rheims, Chartres, Bourges, Amiens, Rouen and others. But there are also many fine examples in French domestic architecture. The ones known to every tourist include the house of Jacques Coeur at Bourges and many houses at Rouen and elsewhere. These are replete with suggestions for those who are intending to build a house wrought lavishly in stone. Such lacework in stone can very well be done! But not for many of us. Nor have many—if any—of us old Gothic tapestries, without which a Gothic room loses the object of its being!

Nor are many of us more than impersonally interested in those vast châteaux of the Renaissance that Francis I and his successors built in the province of Touraine—most of them on the banks of the Loire. We journey to see them because they are of historical importance as well as of architectural beauty. But, barring a few of the private apartments, they are out of scale with the average idea of home-possibility. At Chenonceaux, Chambord, Blois, and all the others—and even in the so-called "small ones," Azay-le-Rideau and Langeais, there is little material that we can translate into houses of moderate size. Many of these châteaux, however, have served as inspiration for American palaces—especially Blois, whose marvelous open stairway is distinctly the prototype of one that now embellishes an outstanding estate in the Carolinas.

ENTER MADAME

One incident of the French Renaissance (which followed the Gothic Period) has a flavor of irony—or amusement, depending upon how you take it.

The familiar saying, "Man built the House, but woman made the Home," which has such a contentedly domestic sound, had several not very domestic interludes—in France, at all events. The woman who is said to have been the creator of feminine beauty in the French interior—the woman who

changed the Gothic building of stone into a background suitable to herself, and whose knowledge and taste in palace-furnishing were stamped (as was her emblem) on the Renaissance Period of France—was Diane de Poitiers, the favorite companion of Henry II.

Other favorites more or less adept in assembling beautiful rooms, adorning to their personalities, followed throughout the succeeding Periods, but left no definite impression until the Marquise de Pompadour, by favor of Louis XV, repeated —in fact, rather excelled—the feat of la Poitiers. During the nineteen years that la Pompadour was uncrowned queen, she made the French interior famous for all time. Besides some of the finest designs of Sèvres porcelain, many of the most beautiful and restrained examples of furniture and engraving are directly due, not merely to her patronage of the applied arts, but to her guiding genius.

It must be noted, of course, that the Little Trianon, that loveliest "house" in France—or anywhere else, perhaps—was built for Marie Antoinette. But to attempt any detailed description of the French Periods is to be carried out on a current of styles that are as replete with confusing motives as a spring flower-bed in a public park, and would necessitate the space of a whole book—more likely a dozen whole books—to itself.

The houses which this short section is intended to describe —houses which are ideal for American adaptation—are the smaller houses of France. These are usually the small hotels of Paris and the manor houses and farms of the Provinces.

PERFECT FEMININE ROOMS

Most beautiful and most suitable for the furnishing of a woman's room or apartment—or whole house—are all the wood-lined interiors that American decorators are buying as fast as they can be found in France and brought over by steamer. I am calling them wood-lined rather than paneled, because wood-lined is exactly what they are. Walls, ceil-

ings, doors, window trims, mantels and cupboards, all are of wood—and, moreover, all of a piece. Sometimes they are embellished with a moderate amount of carving—very moderate. Sometimes the wood, which may be walnut, chestnut, o. some other wood of light brownish color, is left unstained except by time and wax; more often it is painted old ivory, soft olive, apricot or ashes of lemon, blue-gray or pinkish gray, or a faded shade of apple-green. Sometimes the molding, whether embossed or grooved (generally both), is glazed with gold. Sometimes the painted decoration is very elaborate. Most beautiful of all are those painted in miniature scrolls or with floral bands outlining the panels and rosettes on the corners, or with fragile scenes in small over-door panels or lunettes or on the doors of cupboards.

Always the decoration is in minor tone—usually in monochrome classic traceries; in cream or gray on woods painted in the softer gray or olive greens; or green is painted on cream or gray. Many times the color is of one porcelain-surfaced tint—except where the fading of time has thumbed it gently.

Many of the loveliest of these wood-lined rooms, as already noted, are restrained in the elaboration of their detail, no matter which their Period. In the Rococo Period of Louis XIV, their shells and rocks and waves are so modified that the ornamentation is applied in the lightest accent of gayety. The typical rooms, especially those found in the Provinces, are apt to be built in the Period of Louis XV, or occasionally in that of Louis XVI or Directoire. They are most charming with no decoration at all except the curves of the paneling, which also appears in the doors and cupboards and in the window framing.

FRENCH FURNISHING

The finest French interiors are of endlessly intricate detail. Walls that are a series of decorated panels, and chiseled marble mantels that are as delicate as the work of a jeweler. Floors set in parquetry. Appliqués of gilt and crystals. Many

paintings, but of the finely scaled schools of Watteau, Fragonard or Claude. Gobelin and Beauvais tapestries sometimes on the walls, but invariably covering the chairs and sofas. Commodes and vitrines of Buhl, or satinwood veneers, marquetry and porcelain inlays, of varieties far too numerous to list.

THE ROOMS OF THE PROVINCES

No such elaboration, however, is found in rooms of the French countryside. Into the salons of the small châteaux and manor-houses were put simplified assorted articles of furniture. Chairs of Louis XV suggestion are typical. They are sometimes painted, but usually of walnut or chestnut or other unstained wood, upholstered in the material of the curtains; meaning that the room and its hangings are most charming when matched exactly by a certain amount —a third, perhaps as much as a half—of the furniture. To this would be added one-half or two-thirds, perhaps, of other mixture.

In an interior of light gray-green with a little gold, and hangings perhaps of yellow and gray, a small sofa and a chair or two of a scarcely darker greenish tone might be upholstered in the yellow and gray. A brown wood stool might be covered with silver blue. Two chairs, perhaps of light walnut upholstered in blue and faded coral. A gilt chair covered with brocade. A faded red lacquer cabinet or an inlaid writing-table. Occasional tables and ornaments that accentuate the yellow, coral or blue.

When hangings are of taffeta, then cushions of the taffeta are tied to cane-seated chairs, and a small sofa—not often sat on—is upholstered in the taffeta as well.

At this point, a word of warning lest you be led to follow in the footsteps of a New York woman, who, having bought a charming little putty-color-and-gilt room in one of the provinces of France, sent it home with orders to a certain cabinet-maker to fit it, and to fix it where necessary. The cabinet-maker fitted it very well, and "fixed" it thoroughly.

Finding the surface far from new, he planed it off as best he could and sent for a painter to make a good job of it!

As a matter of fact, we can—and do—produce these rooms in America. We can make them quite perfectly. But skill is lacking to duplicate the slight unevenness of surface produced by the softening of time—which is quite different from the mechanical repetition of irregularity.

A perfect key for one who is building a new interior would be a Chippendale mirror. Curved panels, unornamented save for a Chinese motif at the top of an occasional panel and over the cupboards.

To speak of these rooms as "little" may be misleading, since the effect of littleness is really produced by fineness, and many of them are moderately large. The ceilings of some are high, but in the majority of them the proportion is kept low. An eight- or eight-and-a-half-foot ceiling is ample in a little room about twelve feet square; a nine-and-a-half- or even a nine-foot ceiling is not too low for a room that is twenty to twenty-five feet square.

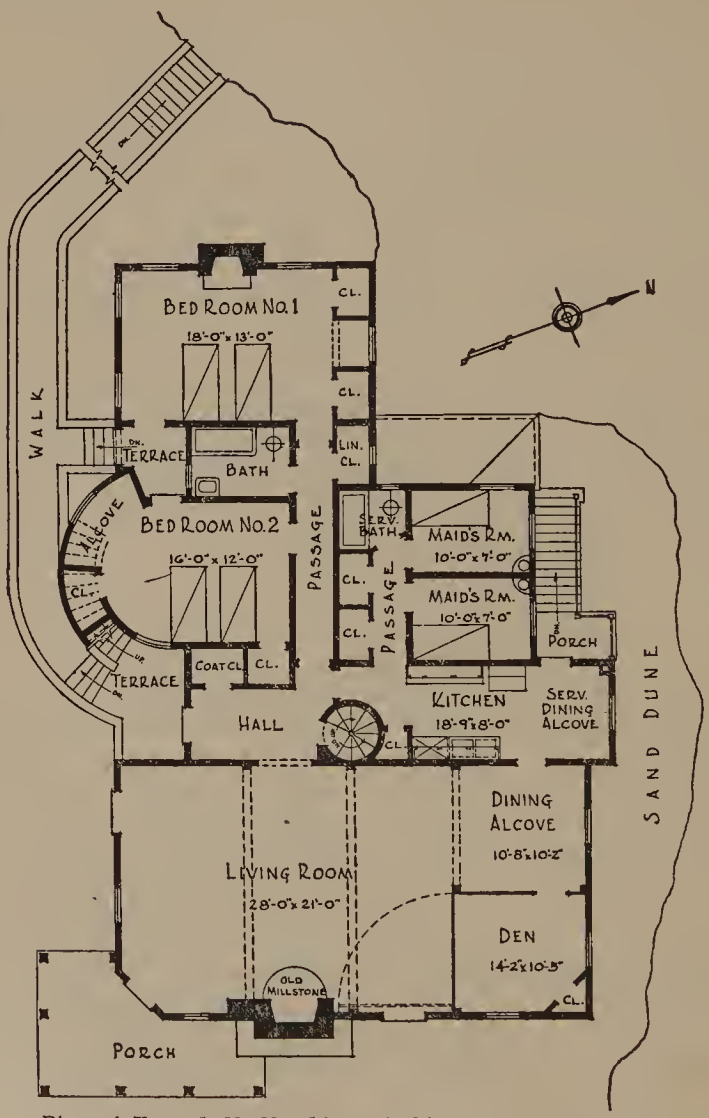
IN THE MODERN APARTMENT

Where the low ceiling is normally a handicap to be struggled with, as in an apartment, these French interiors are ideal. Such backgrounds are most appropriate to the very feminine—no longer so very young—woman who is slightly precious in her taste, and whose friends come in for conversation and a cup of tea. One cannot think of these fragile wood-lined treasure-boxes swarming with a horde of girls and men in golf clothes, who scarcely know the meaning of conversation (so it is said!), and who are notably indifferent to tea!

The French Period is suitable for a drawing-room into which no one goes until after dinner; it is equally suitable for a boudoir or a bedroom, or a small book-room. But in its more formal aspect it is not the sort of room that average men or children feel at home in.

A FRENCH HOUSE THAT MEN LIKE

There is another style of French interior—and exterior as well—that men like exceedingly. This is the Normandy type of house.



Firm of Kenneth M. Murchison, Architects

Fig. 64

NORMANDY COTTAGE—GROUND FLOOR

The name Provençal, by the way, cannot mean Norman cottage. It applies only to a house whose style has come from

Provence, a former province in the Southeast of France, now divided into four departments. The houses of the provinces, on the other hand, are those all over France outside of Paris. At the moment, we are having a Normandy craze, and houses with open-timber frames and pointed roofs are building as thick as mushrooms on the dunes of coast re-

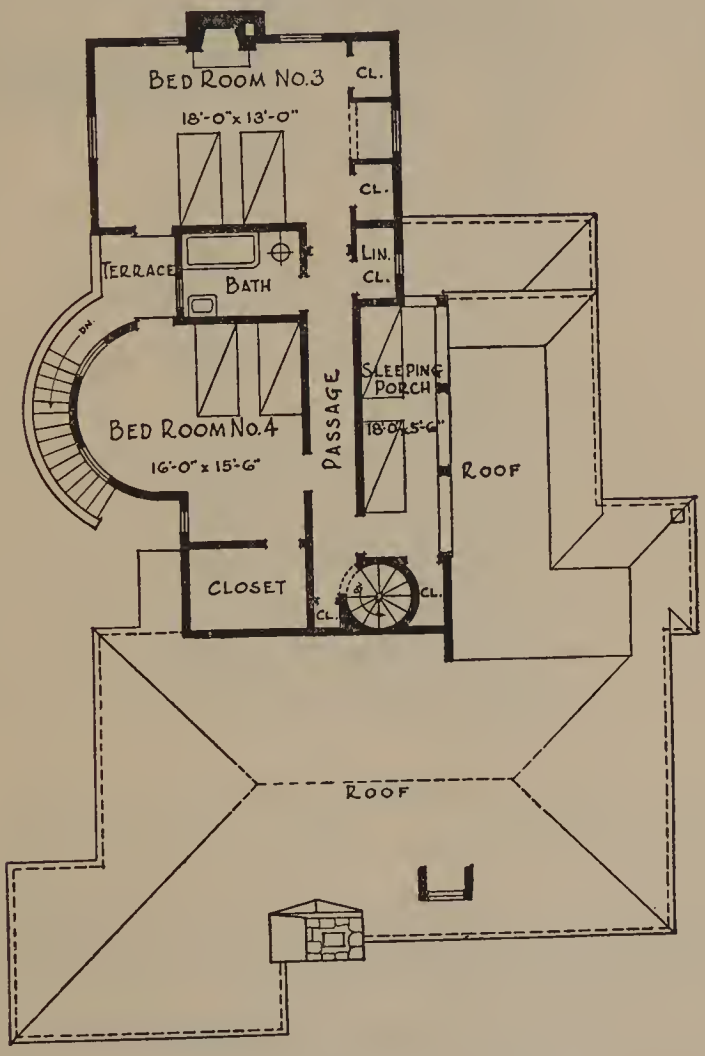


Fig. 65

NORMANDY COTTAGE—SECOND FLOOR

sorts and on the hills inland. They are put up chiefly by those who admire the Tudor-Jacobean-Cotswold house, but

Fig. 66
LOUIS XV

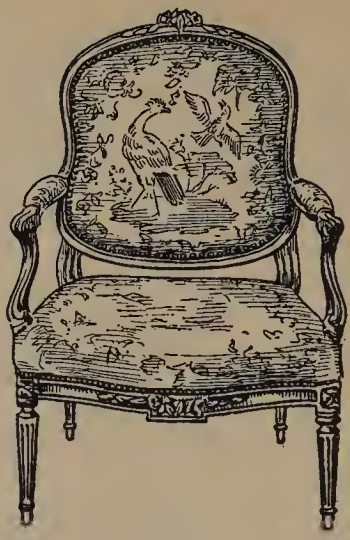


Fig. 67
LOUIS XVI

who prefer (or must be satisfied with) a house of less importance than that of their admiration.

In their favor it can be said that the Normandy houses are exceedingly adaptable and homelike. The walls are of stucco, and open-timbered. Roofs are made of flat tiles (composition usually) and seem to fit on without discomfort, no matter which way they are pointed. The one requirement of beauty is that ridges and valleys must be skilfully adjusted so as to look soft and weathered. When they are sharp-edged

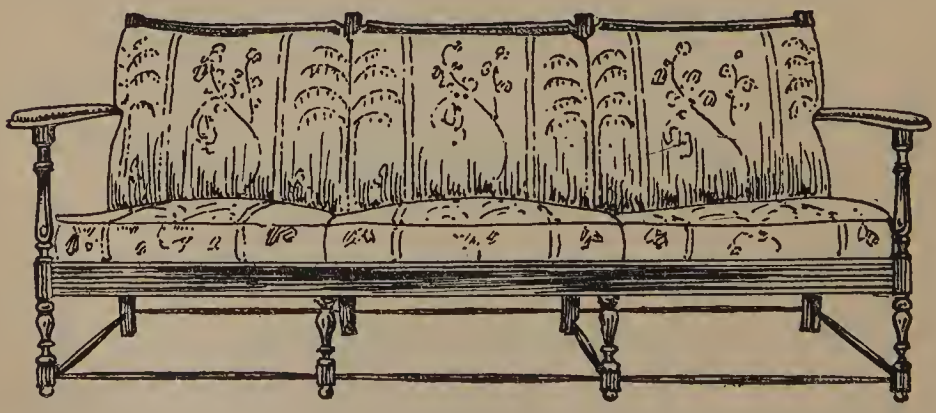


Fig. 68
SOFA OF FRENCH PROVINCES

they are hideous—likewise when they are too fatly rolled-edged.

An architect who is building them by the dozen told me yesterday: "Just handle them picturesquely and you can do anything with them. You can tag a big room on here and a little one there, put on a balcony or roof-garden or whatever

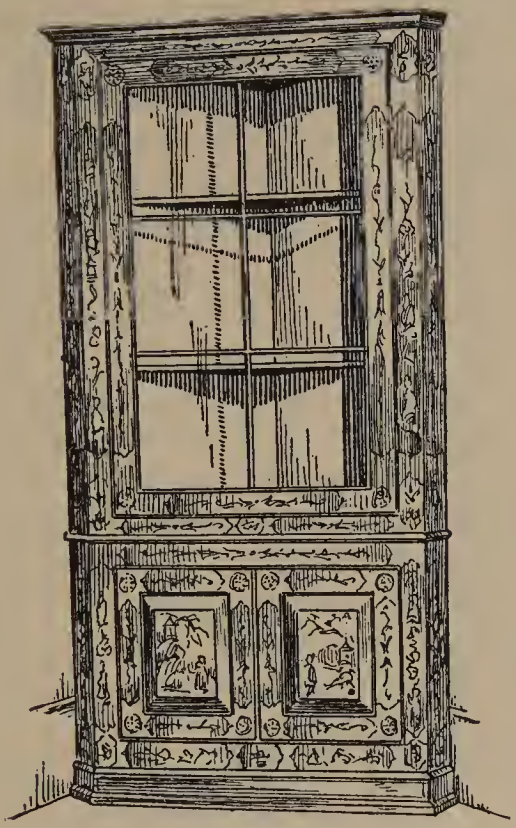


Fig. 69
FRENCH CUPBOARD WITH PAINTED DESIGN

you please. The more irregular they are, the better they look." The word "picturesque" has, I am afraid, a catch in it. It suggests the canvas upon which an artist has applied a lot of layers of paint and made a valuable picture. But paint put on in layers by just any one who can hold a paint-brush is something else again! Which reminds me of something I was told about these make-believe old-new cottages.

The way of the "old-wood-beamed" interior is amusing.

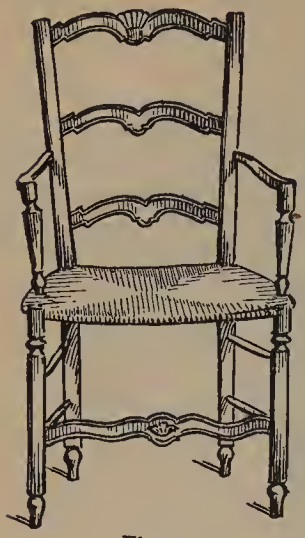


Fig. 70
FRENCH PROVINCIAL

Big machine-sawed beams are planed—not too well—an excellent job for apprentice carpenters. The wood is then stained. When the stain is thoroughly dried in, a coat of whitewash is applied. When that is dry, a thin coating of asphalt is put on and then rubbed off, taking much of the whitewash with it. Result, "old wood" that is detection-defying in its effect!

I have not seen this trick performed and cannot guarantee that the practise of it is as easy as it sounds. But if you want an old weathered beam instead of a new plank, this is the recipe of an expert. I have therefore repeated it exactly as it was told to me.

The plan shown in Figures 64 and 65 is that of a summer cottage built upon an Atlantic Ocean beach. An amusing feature is the outdoor entrance to each of the four bedrooms —for bathers from the beach. Another is that the partition walls of the room marked "Den" swing or lift out of the way, so that the living-room may be made the full width of the building for a small dance.

For those who might like to build a Normandy, Brittany,

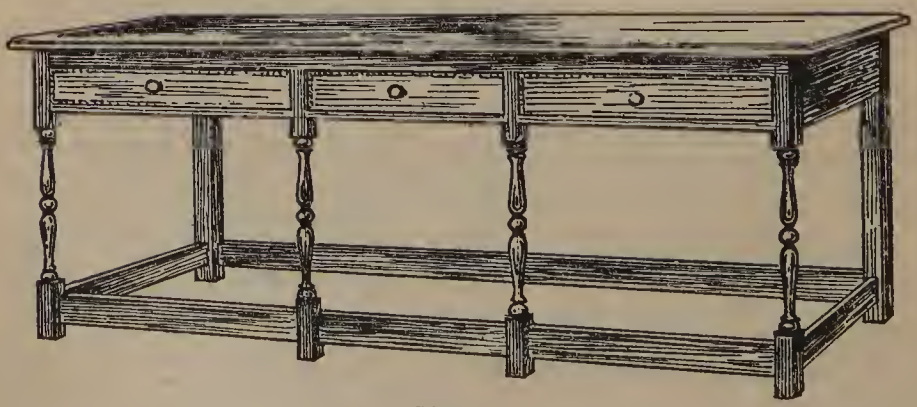


Fig. 71
FRENCH PROVINCIAL TABLE SUITABLE TO ALL PRIMITIVE HOUSES

Fig. 72
FRENCH PEASANT SIDEBOARD
(A style of furniture much imported for Colonial and Normandy houses)

Provençal or any other type of French farm or manor house, there is a portfolio of drawings called *The Domestic Architecture of Rural France*, by Chamberlain. It is filled from cover to cover with designs of small houses that are so entrancing that the temptation to dig ground and put up half a dozen of them is scarcely to be resisted. A great difficulty would be in duplicating the irresistible spell of the drawings. But there are houses that would be suitable in any neighborhood. The manor houses suggest the wood-lined rooms described above; quaint small ones, on the other hand, would be delectable with any primitive type of furniture—Colonial, Jacobean, Spanish—mixed with their own primitive French.

I have rather emphasized Mr. Chamberlain's book because I know of no other—except the *White Pine Series of Monographs* on Colonial houses—that is so crammed full of suggestions for little houses that can be so sweet—and yet so seldom are.

FURNITURE FOR FRENCH PERIODS

Typical chairs of Louis XV and Louis XVI—such as shown in Figures 66 and 67—would be suitable for wood-lined rooms, described above, or for the paneled manor houses of more formal type. And so would the lovely cabinet painted in light grays and greens and creams shown in Figure 69.

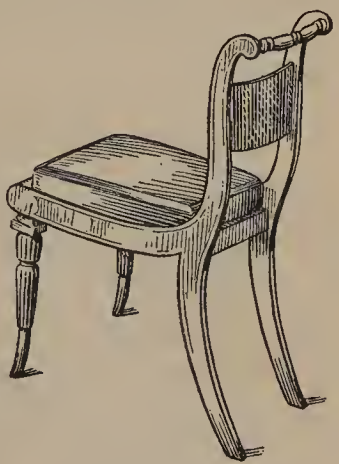


Fig. 73
DIRECTOIRE CHAIR

For the Normandy houses and—equally suitable—for our own Colonial houses, there is now being brought to America a great deal of most adaptable furniture that is made of various light brown unpainted woods. A little of it is old, but most of it is modern with much of the effect of the old. Sometimes it is quite sophisticated, such as the settee in the hall in Plate 16. In Plate 46 the side chair is old and of lovely-colored wood, and the carving of Duncan Phyfe's favorite motif, a lyre, is charmingly done. The quilted-petticoat-covered chairs shown in this same plate and in Plate 50 are now being made by the thousand, and petticoat quilting is far from being unusual—also far from any likelihood of ever having been petticoats!

There is a very nice sofa (Fig. 68) and a chair (Fig. 70) that will go in any primitive or simple type of house. A painted example of this same chair, with a cushion on it, is shown in Plate 17, and in natural wood in Plate 20. Another type is shown in Plate 57.

And a table like Figure 71 would fit in any imaginable variety of not-too-formal house. The side piece (Fig. 72), made of pine or fruit wood is suitable in a Normandy or American cottage equally. Figure 73 is a Directoire chair that is almost equally English Adams and American Empire. Its front legs are somewhat pantaletted, but it is otherwise a perfect Colonial chair. (Also see American Empire example in Plate 54.)

4. THE ENGLISH HOUSE

The English Period, as many of us think of it, is cut into distinctly separated halves. The one which we think of as "English" is the early Tudor, Elizabethan, Jacobean, Cotswold, English Cottage, or whatever we call it. The other, which might be classified as the house that Jones and Wren built, we simply label Georgian, whether it was built by Jones in the days of Charles I or by an Adam brother in the days of George III.

The first type of house is built of stone, or of open timber filled in with stucco or with nogging of brick. Other characteristics are unpainted materials, multiple roofs covered with stone or slate surmounted by tall chimneys, usually ending in a row of ornamental chimney-pots. Gables are a continuation of the side walls, and there are always casement windows and dark wood trim within.

The second type of house is evenly balanced—therefore formal. It is built of smooth-faced stone or brick, with quoins of marble or of heavier stone at the corners, and with a hip or double gabled roof, or one that is hidden behind a balustrade. The chimneys are plain and the dormers rise from the roof without relation to the side walls.

Serious delving into history is far beyond the scope of this book, but as the family story of the English Periods is that of our own, it seems to me that a family tree of some sort must be included. Instead of adding a thumb-nail chart at the end of the chapter, as I had intended, I might better write it now, so that it can show at a glance exactly where the styles belong that we unceasingly refer to in buying furniture for our houses to-day:

OLD ENGLISH

TUDOR	Henry VII	1485	Reign of Henry VIII. Beauty and so-called luxury brought to England from Italy. Lavish splendor culminates in Elizabethan period. All detail large in scale and coarsely elaborate, but effective in mass.
	Henry VIII	1509	
	Edward VI	1547	
	Mary	1553	
	Elizabeth	1558	
STUART	James I	1603	The Jacobean Period (from Jacobus, Latin for James), also called the Stuart Period. Differs little from that of Elizabeth Tudor, except that Scotch economy takes the place of cousin Elizabeth's love of display.
	Charles I	1625-1653	
THE COMMONWEALTH	Oliver Cromwell, Lord Protector of England	1653	Jacobean-Stuart styles become fanatically dour. It is this influence that is carried by the Puritans who sail for America.
	Son succeeded father for one year	1658	

OLD ENGLISH—*Continued*

ANARCHY	Revolt against oppression	1649-1660	With the inevitable result of swinging the pendulum to the other extreme.
RESTORATION OF THE STUART LINE	Charles II	1660	Manners, morals and magnificence all brought from the court of Louis XIV of France. Extravagance of Charles has one valuable result: abetted by the great fire of London, Sir Christopher Wren is given his chance to build St. Paul's Cathedral, Temple Bar, and other buildings and churches of permanent beautification to England.
	James II	1685	James II's daughter Mary and Dutch son-in-law William take his place, 1688.

GEORGIAN

HOUSE OF ORANGE (DUTCH)	William and Mary	1688	Home influence. Domestic virtues. Furniture brought from Holland is very refined. Vase-shaped splat and cabriole leg and other Dutch curved outlines later tagged with Anne's name.
THE LAST STUART	Queen Anne	1702	Anne unprotestingly accepts the style of William. Needlework seems to be her absorbing hobby.
THE GEORGES	George I	1714	To these are attributed "Georgian" architecture, with the creation of which they had almost as little to do as Anne with her furniture. In the reign of George II and George III, furniture to suit the style of houses created by Jones and Wren are made by the greatest of English cabinet-makers—Chippendale, Hepplewhite and Sheraton—supplemented by the architects Adam. Under George III we sever our family relationship with England.
	George II	1727	
	George III	1760	
	George IV	1820	
	William IV	1830	
	Victoria	1837	Victoria included merely to complete the outline.

Just why we draw a mental dividing-line somewhere between William and Mary, and George the Second, is not very clear. And yet for more than two hundred years we have continued to look upon the classic Georgian Period as the sole ancestress of our New England and Southern Colonial twins, and to call every Period from the days of the early Saxons to the reign of Anne—or even the first George—"English."

And yet our earliest Colonial houses and furniture come straight from the Periods of James I, Charles I, and Cromwell—in short, they are pure Jacobean!

Our early Colonial chairs—those with ladder backs and rush seats, which we think of as native American, are really Elizabethan.

At the moment, quite apart from tracing our Colonial lineage, our interest in English houses has been fanned into flame. Starting in Pennsylvania, where beautiful native stone naturally encouraged the use of it, modern Tudor and Jacobean houses are now building from one end of the country to the other, because there is no type of house which so thoroughly appeals to a man. (See Plate 24.)

It is impossible, therefore, to begin the outline of the English house at a later period than that in which the father of Elizabeth was King, and whichever of his wives we might choose was rather temporary Queen, of England.

At the beginning of the Tudor Period, the great dwelling was still the Keep. This was a feudal fortress in which the lord of the castle lived—surrounded by innumerable retainers and servants—in a stronghold protected by a moat and drawbridge and all the other defensive devices of the times—and in barbarous discomfort.

The central feature of the interior was the huge high-ceilinged, church-vaulted room called the Hall. In this the family, the retainers and servants all took their meals together; the family sitting at a long table on the dais and the servants at benches ranged beyond and below. At night the lord and his lady withdrew to their private apartments,

where they slept in a great bed curtained on all four sides; but their household, both men and women, as well as the dogs, slept on the rush-covered floor of the hall.

When Henry VIII heard of the comfortable furnishings of the Italians—Anne Boleyn is supposed to have carried the news—he not only imported hangings and furniture, but invited Italian architects and painters and craftsmen to England. Unfortunately, this turned out rather badly. The English workmen resented the rivalry of foreigners so strenuously that the highly trained and cultivated Italians were all sent home. Utterly ignorant and unskilled English labor botched along through the reigns of Henry, Edward, and Mary, to the day when Elizabeth and the dawn of culture made their simultaneous appearance on England's hitherto unenlightened throne.

WHEN ELIZABETH WAS QUEEN

Strongholds being no longer necessary, the English country house that still serves as a model of homelike hospitality, was one of the first objects to appear in the broad daylight of the Elizabethan age.

The coming of trade routes which brought commodities of all varieties—as well as wealth—to England gave an incentive to the more comfortable furnishing of English houses. Many walls were still of bare stone, with coarsely woven arras hung over the door openings; but gradually finer tapestries were imported from Flanders and used as embellishments. The rushes with which the floors had been strewn were swept out, and woven floor-coverings laid down, and the decencies of living gradually developed.

Paneling became the universal fashion. High wainscots were built of dark oak, either in small squares or flat carving, or in linen-fold design. Half-circle arches supported on uprights were carved in almost every space big enough to hold one or more of them. Doorways were as ornate as the chimney-pieces. The open vaulting was replaced by the more homelike Italian ceilings, which were flat and finished in

hard stucco with low-relief geometrical designs of squares and circles.

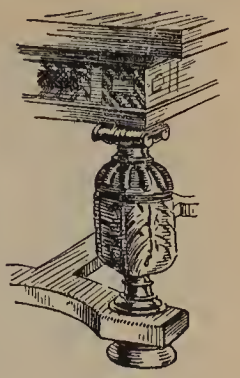


Fig. 74
ELIZABETHAN TABLE LEG

The furniture of the period was enormously large in scale, and completely covered with carving that was crude in detail, but effective. Furniture for the best rooms, as already noted, was made of oak, though sometimes the kitchens and houses of the farmers were furnished with "deal" (fir or pine). And partitions were put up between the family and the animals. Beds and chests were the outstanding articles of furniture. The beds were ponderous and as ornamented as carving could make them. The headboard was much like that of the chimney-pieces and supported the head of the canopy. The foot was held upon two ornate posts that ballooned in the center. Chests were used as seats as well as for storage space. Other articles were limited to "bread and cheese" cupboards, chairs, and huge refectory tables with bulbous legs and plain underframing close to the floor. (Fig. 74.) A few of the chairs brought from Italy had upholstered seats and backs,

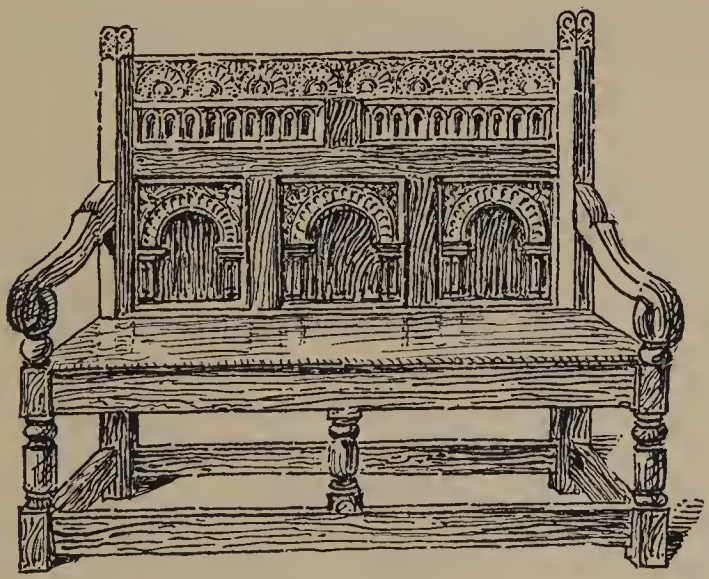


Fig. 75
ELIZABETHAN SEAT

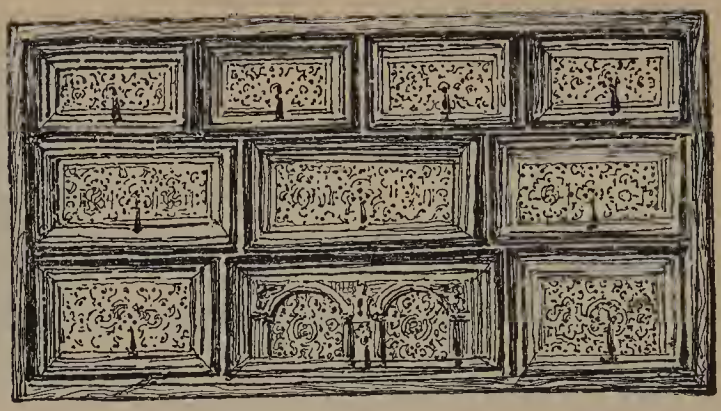


Fig. 76
JACOBEAN CHEST

and a few replicas of these were made in England. The typical chair or bench of the period, however, was entirely of oak. (Fig. 75.)

AS THE ELIZABETHAN PERIOD APPLIES TO US

The point that we should take note of is that Elizabethan furniture, for instance, is suitable only in houses or rooms of great size. It is large in scale and gives a general effect of magnificence, but it is often strikingly crude in detail. Therefore, if your problem is the furnishing of a barnlike room—quite possibly the actual interior of a barn turned into a living-room—Elizabethan furniture would be as good a choice as you could make; but in rooms of medium or small space, beware of its overpowering exaggeration.

The colors of the period included quantities of browns, the deeper shades of red, greens, and blues, all of which gave an effect that was richly sombre; it was not gloomy, however, because window-glass was becoming more plentiful, and though the panes were very small, they were used in increasing quantities, held in place with strips of lead. Windows grew larger and larger, until in some rooms they filled the entire side of a wall. In fact, such buildings as Hardwick Hall were said to have "more glass than wall."

The intention of the Elizabethan house-design was hos-

pitality. A beautiful example of this spirit is the entrance to Montacute, over which is inscribed "And your's my friends."

THE JACOBEAN PERIOD

When James of Scotland came to the throne, he brought about no radical changes in the style of Elizabeth, excepting that ornament was checked and all needless waste of material discouraged. The gables on the houses grew higher and stiffer, ornamental parapets disappeared, furniture became increasingly rigid, and there was a gradual elimination of the balloon designs that had been admired by Elizabeth.

James I, however, was greatly in favor of armchairs of Italian design with crossed legs and cushion. An interesting feature is found in the turned legs, and in the stretchers of chairs and tables, with blocks set in the joining—precisely like that of the gate-leg and butterfly table of Colonial days. (Fig. 77.) The settle or armchair with back that folds over the arm and makes a table is sold by all makers of Colonial reproductions. (See round-backed settle, Plate 43.)

The important architectural event of the early Jacobean Period, which includes the reign of Charles I, was the return of Inigo Jones from Italy and his creation of the Classic English house that was later to be known as Georgian—though Jones had lain in his grave for more than half a century before the first George was crowned.

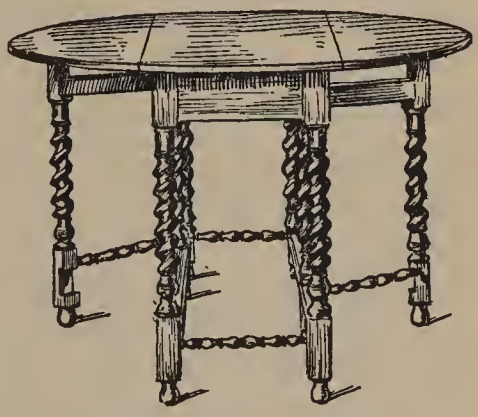


Fig. 77
JACOBEAN PROTOTYPE OF COLONIAL GATE-LEG TABLE

THE COMMONWEALTH

The influence of Cromwell is of especial importance to us because it is from this Period of dour austerity that the point of view of our Puritan settlers, no less than

our early New England architecture and furniture, came. Our early colonists were imbued with the asceticism of the Cromwellian creed; mortification of the flesh in the form of privation and discomfort was looked upon as virtue, and every form of ease and comfort was sin. The narrow rush-seated ladder-backed chairs, the hard board beds, the wooden settles and benches and wooden-seated chairs were quite possibly chosen not so much from necessity as from aspiration to virtue. Our earliest Colonial houses, though often defined as "Tudor," were completely Cromwellian-Jacobean. There was nothing of the Tudor family's self-indulgence in the scrupulousness of their intention.

MODERN USE OF THE OLD ENGLISH STYLE

Before leaving the subject of the Tudor and Jacobean Periods, it may be well to say something about their descendants in America to-day. For a moment, therefore, let us turn from the days of Cromwell to those of the present, and consider briefly the characteristics that are essential to an interpretation of old English style in a modern house.

The great beauty of the "English" house is its sincerity and its effect of spacious and friendly comfort. Its honest use of material is for the purpose of durability. Wherever possible, its choice is for local stone and slate, and its color is supplied by means of natural unpainted material which time increasingly beautifies. Its form, which is of direct Tudor ancestry, includes what might be defined as the "home-making quality," and it accepts every type of interior decoration and furnishing that is simple and also direct.

In other words, the ballyhoo house is diametrically opposed to the first principle of charm, which is repose. On the other hand, the too formal house is opposed to the quality of inviting comfort. To define the elements that produce the effect of restfulness and of relaxing ease, there is no better example than the perfect old English house. Therefore, unless

abominably designed with too steep a roof, too narrow and too few windows and other architectural exaggerations, or unless the assembling of its materials is harshly handled, it quite naturally gives the impression of permanence, stability, and comfort that the cultivated man dreams of when he thinks of "home." In its distorted form, it expresses too sharp angles, eccentric what-is-its, and no-reason-wherefores! Its outside is chopped into, and its inside is cut up into a

Fig. 78
CHARLES I CHAIR

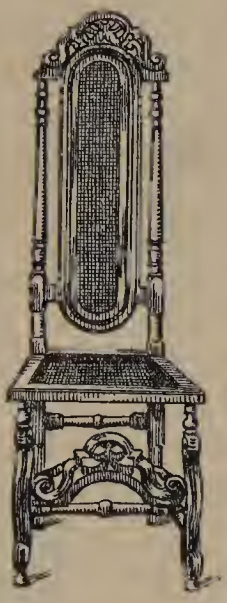


Fig. 79
CHARLES II

Fig. 80
QUEEN ANNE CHAIR

lot of little stalls or compartments in which there is neither grace nor ease.

If your house is to be huge, you can have as many divisions as you please; but if the space of your house is small, you only make it smaller by cutting it into samples. Screened partitions around the stairs in a little hall, an ingle-nook or other stuttering obstruction is equally destructive to comfort and repose.

And now let us turn back again to the end of Cromwell, the rigors of whose control ended in anarchy and the consequent Restoration of the Stuarts. Charles the Second be-

came King. He and his brother James, who followed him, exchanged Cromwell's stiff discomfort for French gildings and luxuries—to say nothing of profligacies. Many French objects of furniture in the overgilded and ornate Period known as Baroque were brought over from the Court of Louis XIV by the King and his favorites. The end of the Period developed the Flemish chair with turned frame, scrolled stretcher, and tall ornamental back elaborately framing an inset of cane. (Fig. 79.)

Other furniture of the Period included chairs and tables and chests supported on trestles with curved stretchers and legs inset with turned trumpets and inverted cups. Drawers had long drop-handles. There was much square or octagonal or variously outlined paneling without carving. Ovals and rounds and all imaginable patterns of spindles and drops were split and glued on as the decorations of otherwise plain surfaces.

WILLIAM AND MARY ARRIVE

When Charles II had died, and James his brother had given up his succession in order to enjoy the pleasures of life

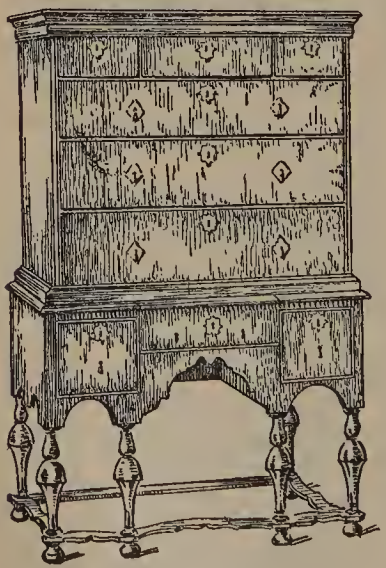


Fig. 81
WILLIAM AND MARY
HIGHBOY

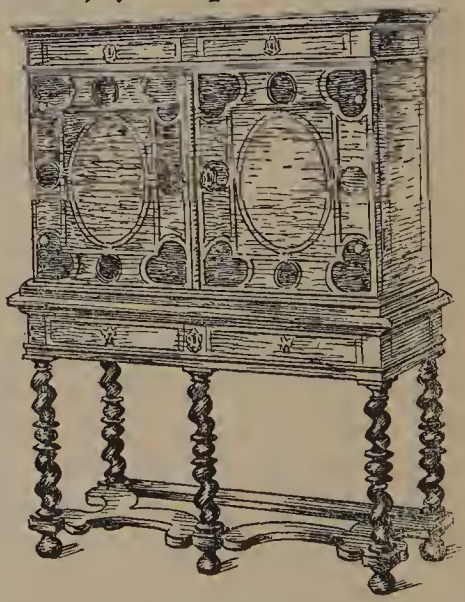


Fig. 82
WILLIAM AND MARY
CABINET

in France, the daughter of James and her Dutch husband, William III, Prince of Orange, removed themselves and all their belongings to England. According to accounts, they must have left little that was transportable behind them. This moving was a most notable event in the history of English—and American—house furnishing.

The French importations by Charles and James had made not a ripple beyond the gates of the royal palaces. The typical English houses continued to be supplied with square-framed furniture made of the solid oak of England, all of it—change its trimming as one might! But no sooner was the furniture of William and Mary unloaded than the news of its curved shape, its smooth-polished wood, spread like wildfire! Every lady in the countryside, no less than in London, longed for a sitting-room furnished with bandylegged elegance. The chairs and cabinets of William and Mary—which we know by the name of "Queen Anne"—were light and fine and entirely different in outline and in surface texture from any English furniture which had gone before. (Fig. 80.)

The style, however, that bears the name of William and Mary is illustrated in Figure 81. Another very Jacobean William-and-Mary cabinet is shown in Figure 82.

The next, and most important, Period of furniture was that of the three great cabinet-makers of the eighteenth century. And since the designs of these three men (to which must be added the designs of Adam and our own Duncan Phyfe) are the models of excellence, it seems rather necessary to consider each of them, and their styles, at some length.

CHIPPENDALE

To Thomas Chippendale must be given the same eminence as a furniture-maker that is held by Inigo Jones as an architect—in that he was the creator of a new interpretation in close accord with Classic style, and in the beautification of a new medium—mahogany. Son of a woodcarver, and him-

self a wood-carver, it was natural that his furniture should display especial skill of this art.

While none of the experts proclaim him a copyist, they do agree that he took ideas wherever he found them, but developed them into a style that was his own. His outstanding model was the style of the two curving Louis of France—XIV and XV—but upon this inspiration he constructed every motif that chance brought his way.

Amusingly, perhaps, it was Chippendale's mastery of Chinese design that brought him his greatest popularity—especially in mirrors. And yet that every Chinese design which was epidemic in the middle of the eighteenth century should be without exception tagged "Chippendale," seems hardly fair to the many notable designers of the day. Edwards and Darley, Thomas Johnson, the Halfpennys, Matthias Lock, Ince and Mayhew, and others, had been turning London into a veritable Chinatown before Chippendale made his famous discovery of Chinese motif.

But none of these are ever mentioned as having given Chippendale a single idea. The inspiration credited by all his biographers is that of Sir William Chambers, the favorite architect of George I. The rickety bamboo furniture which the architect persisted in having constructed for whichever of his clients would let him, gave the cabinet-maker the inspiration for the fragile, perforated fretwork introduced into his chair-backs and table-rims.

A certain few of Chippendale's biggest pieces, especially the state beds, are overcanopied to the point of annoyance; but his fretwork-rimmed tables and China cabinets, and the long-beaked bird amidst the scrolled "C's" of his name ornamenting his gilt mirror frames, are dreams of Celestial loveliness.

The Chippendale furniture that we all know best, perhaps, includes his ball and claw-foot chairs with broad-shouldered backs, his center-columned piecrust tables, and his secretary book-cases. His book, *The Gentleman's and Cabinet-Maker's Directory,* was published in 1754. A

modern reproduction of it is to be found in nearly every public library.

MESSRS. A. HEPPLEWHITE AND COMPANY

Chippendale had long been at the top of the ladder of fame when two younger men, whose names are invariably bracketed with his, mounted the rungs beside him. About thirty-five years after Chippendale's book appeared, Hepplewhite—or, rather, Messrs. A. Hepplewhite and Company—published *The Cabinet-Maker and Upholsterer's Guide, or Repository of Designs for Every Article of Household Furniture in the Newest and Most Approved Taste.*

It is rather the popular belief that Chippendale stands head and shoulders above all other eighteenth-century cabinet-makers—but many students and collectors declare Hepplewhite a truer artist than Chippendale—and Sheraton the truest of the three.

Chippendale must often have worked with his tongue in his cheek and with commercial advantage in his mind. He was no stranger to the desire to create novelties in the hope that they might sell quickly. Hepplewhite also strove for novelty, but not at the risk of departing from that motto at the beginning of his book: "To unite elegance and utility, and blend the useful with the agreeable." Hepplewhite was a hundred and fifty years in advance of the modernists of to-day, one of whose multiple aims is precisely—in almost the same words—the beautification of utility.

The actual motto of the firm was "DELICACY AND ELEGANCE." These two words expressed the intention of every Hepplewhite design. Delicacy was interpreted in refinement of scale and symmetry. Elegance was interpreted in grace and exquisite detail of workmanship. The scale of some of Hepplewhite's furniture is so small as to be almost miniature —and always it is extremely feminine.

Chippendale's furniture, while fragile compared with Tudor and Jacobean massiveness, is nevertheless stable enough

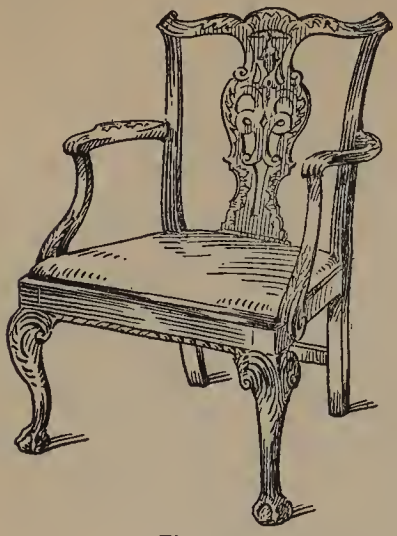


Fig. 83
CHIPPENDALE ARMCHAIR,
CABRIOLE LEG

Fig. 84
HEPPLEWHITE CHAIR,
VASE SPLAT

to be reassuring to the most masculine. (Fig. 83.) But the average satinwood, slender-legged Hepplewhite chair is the typical man's anathema! (Fig. 84.)

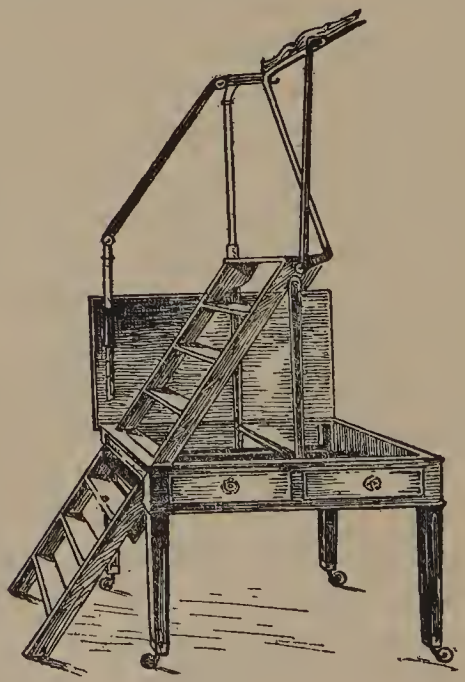


Fig. 85
SHERATON LADDER TABLE

Hepplewhite centered his ornamentation on the backs of chairs, which were usually shield-shaped hollow frames, fitted with an elaborate skeleton design of loops and urns or Prince of Wales feathers. He strove to bring lightness and color into rooms that had hitherto been somber, by the use of light-colored satinwood and painted ornament.

SHERATON

The story of Sheraton is that of many of the other great characters of the world. He belonged to the tribe of characteristically simple, self-effacing men, absorbed in their visions, and rather fanatically hoping to endow humanity with their gift of knowledge or beauty.

As poor and unknown as Messrs. A. Hepplewhite and Company were rich and recognized; utterly incapable of understanding the commercial showmanship of Chippendale, Sheraton worked all his life in poverty. The fame which was given him by posterity was not dreamed of by the customers of his day. In 1791 he published also a book, *The Cabinet-Makers' and Upholsterers' Drawing-Book,* com-

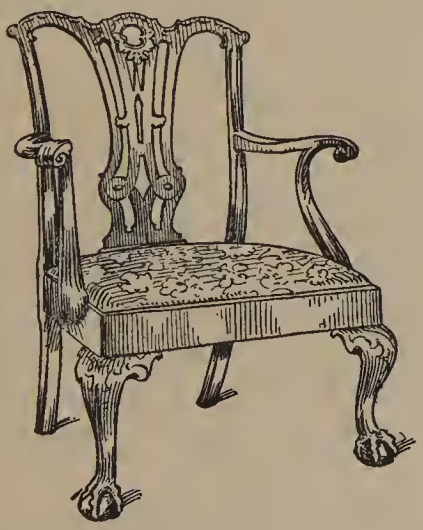


Fig. 86
CHIPPENDALE CABRIOLE CHAIR

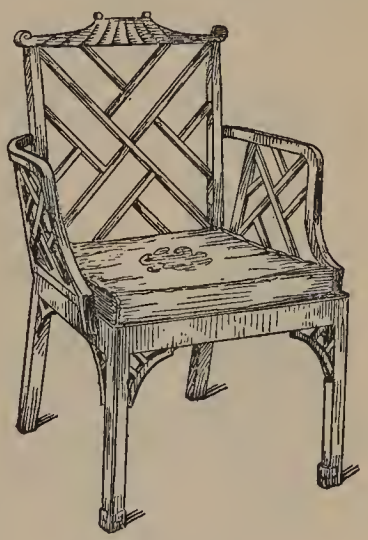


Fig. 87
CHINESE CHIPPENDALE CHAIR

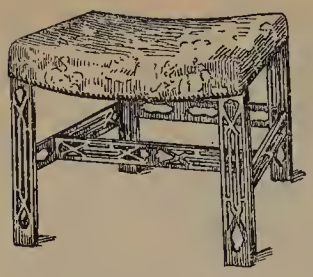


Fig. 88
CHINESE CHIPPENDALE, FRETTED STYLE

pleted in four volumes. The first quarter of this work is a discourse on geometry, perspective drawing, and the Classic Orders—a dissertation on the necessity for a thorough knowledge of these principles by all who aspired to his profession.

And yet his designs give but small idea of the beauty of the actual furniture. Even in his own drawings, many of them look overtrimmed and fussy, whereas in the actual rendering the effect was quite the contrary. He delighted in dark-brown-toned mahogany inlaid with every variety of light-wood marquetry, and often embellished with painting. But most of all he delighted in the ingenious contrivances of "harlequin" furniture that, seeming to be a simple table, turned into a library ladder (Fig. 85), a dressing-stand or writing-desk when the table-top was lifted. Sheraton's dexterity in camouflaging an object of homely utility should be more than ever valuable in this day of crowded space, when the flat-in-one-room idea is rapidly drawing near. In the *Cabinet-Makers' and Upholsterers' Drawing-Book* are endless suggestions for roll-back tambour screens that disclose you know not what.

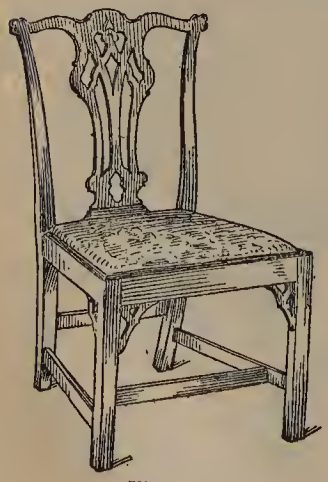


Fig. 89
CHIPPENDALE—STRAIGHT LEG

Personally I like best Sheraton's beautiful mahogany secretary-bookcases with tambour doors, and his sideboards with little, if any, inlay. Tambour slides, by the way, were made of very small split reeds of wood glued on material. Closed they look like reeded doors, open they slide out of the way into the recesses made to hold them.

In contour, Sheraton's furniture is straight-lined and simple, relying for its beauty on perfect proportion.

THE STYLES OF THE GREAT THREE

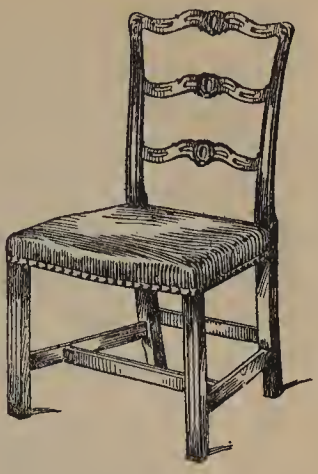


Fig. 90
CHIPPENDALE LADDER BACK

A few of the characteristics by which we classify the styles of these three men are as follows:

The wood associated with Chippendale was Spanish mahogany of darkest color. It was dense and heavy, and aged beautifully. It was always embellished with carving. His chairs are often cabriole-legged with ball-and-claw feet. The arms are out-curving, and the supporting post is back of the front legs of the chair, while the rails of the arms terminate in a spread-out and rolled-under rest for the hand, as seen in Figure 86.

The "Chinese" chairs and many later models had straight legs. (Figs. 87, 88, 89.) He never used inlays of other woods. He often used gilding—on his mirrors, for instance—but he never used paint. He was first and foremost a wood-carver, and a wood-carver he remained. For the fine fretwork of his Chinese designs he used wafer-thin woods glued three-ply, with grain running in opposite directions.

Chinese Chippendale chair-seats were often of wood as flat as a table-top. The upholstery of the other chairs and sofas was sometimes finished on the outside of the seat-frame with nail-heads (Figs. 90 and 91), but usually the seat fitted into a frame (as in Figures 83, 86, and 89).

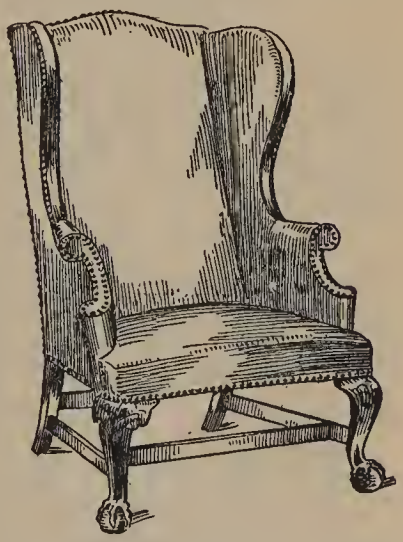


Fig. 91
CHIPPENDALE WING CHAIR

In his gilt mirrors and girandoles, as well as in many commodes and other mahogany pieces, Chippendale followed the curved

lines of Louis XIV—especially the short curve that suggested the C of his name.

Sheraton followed the straight lines of Louis XVI.

A supposed test whereby one may recognize the Hepplewhite chair-back is that its curve is unbroken at the top. The Sheraton chair always has a shoulder set in, or a bar across the center. (Figs. 92 and 93.) The Hepplewhite arms are usually set back, as are those of the Queen Anne and Chippendale chair. The arms said to be characteristic of the Shera-

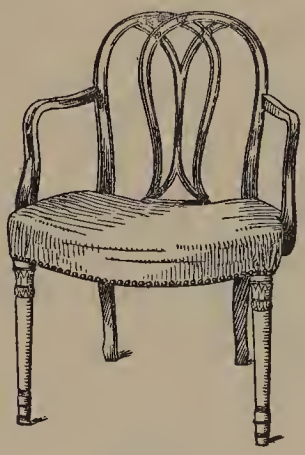


Fig. 92
HEPPLEWHITE

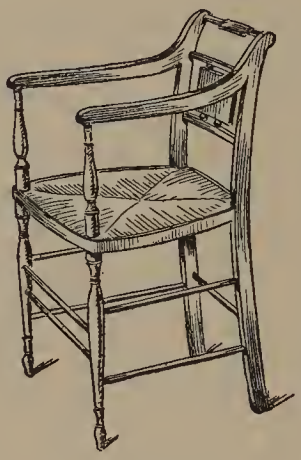


Fig. 93
SHERATON

ton chairs are recognizable as being a continuation of the front legs of the chairs. This feature—when present—marks him quite easily. But Sheraton often made a set-back arm. (Fig. 94.)

Hepplewhite had a great fancy for satinwood and for painted decoration. Sheraton embellished his furniture with inlay and sometimes with painting. Some Hepplewhite chairs had cane seats with cushions tied by tasseled cords to the frame.

Sheraton's chair-legs were turned and often reeded, but he also made occasional straight legs with or without the spade foot. Hepplewhite preferred the straight leg with a spade foot (Fig. 95), but often made turned ones, and on oc-

casions a modified cabriole. Hepplewhite very much liked upholstery fastened on with plain bossed nail-heads. But Chippendale used this upholstery also. The "pie-crust" cabriole-columned tip-table is typically Chippendale, as is also Chinese and Gothic. Fret-carving is typically his.

Glass in the doors of Hepplewhite book-cases was often set in brass; the ends of his sideboards were typically concave, while Sheraton's were usually convex. (Fig. 96.)

On occasions most of these rules were broken, since each

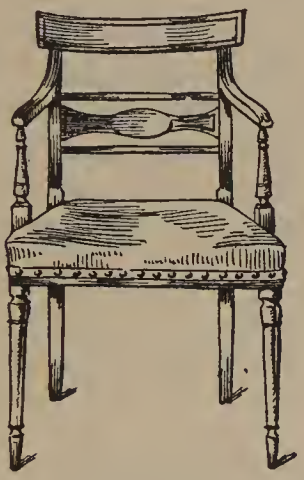


Fig. 94
SHERATON

Fig. 95
HEPPLEWHITE

borrowed from the other; but the list indicates the characteristics by which we classify various pieces of furniture, though the chances are slight of their ever having seen the work-benches of any of them. You never can tell, however, whether one of the pieces that have come down to you—or that you buy here or there—may not be one of theirs, or at least made by one of their contemporaries.

Innumerable pieces of Hepplewhite's work came to America (Fig. 97), and a certain number of Sheraton's. The best of Chippendale's are said to have been held in England—but who knows where or how many they are!

And to go back to the subject of Labels: An *authentic* piece, if it is at all a good one, is a treasure of value. That

is undeniable! But, on the other hand, if a piece be the work of a nameless artist who worked with the same love of his craft that brought the greater names to fame, it is not less beautiful as an object to treasure. A beautiful thing is a beautiful thing, even though its label be lost. Form, balance, proportion, fineness—if you live with beautiful pieces, you *know*. If you are not sure of this, and want to know what is meant by perfect color and texture, go to a museum and look at the best examples of whichever type of furniture you are interested in. Go and look at them again and again. Make drawings of them—even though you can't draw. Because, by putting their outlines on paper, you fix them in your mind. If no museum is near you, there are many notable books.* A huge one, *The Furniture Treasury,* by Wallace Nutting (two volumes), is a collection of five thousand photographic reproductions of the best furniture in the United States. No one could look through these volumes carefully and attentively without having a very definite idea of the meaning of beauty and personality in the furniture of an American house.

* One who is interested in any of the great Period styles should make a special study of that epoch. Books on each Period in each country are to be found in all art museums and public libraries. Or they may be bought of all the larger booksellers, or of William Helburn, Inc., of New York, publisher of books of Art, Architecture and Decoration, who will gladly advise on special books or a course of study.

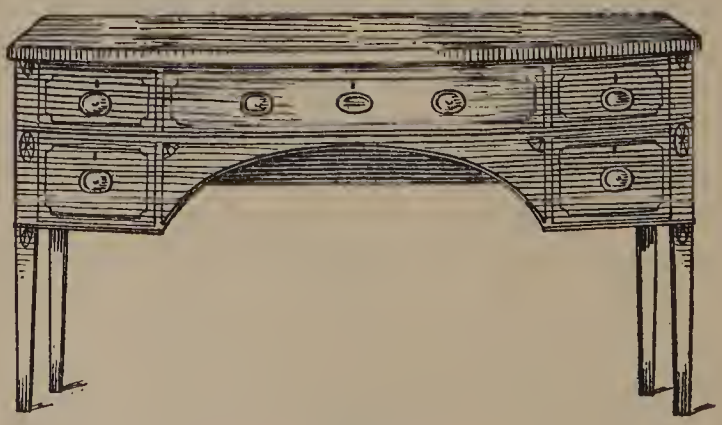


Fig. 96
SHERATON SIDEBOARD

THE ADAM BROTHERS

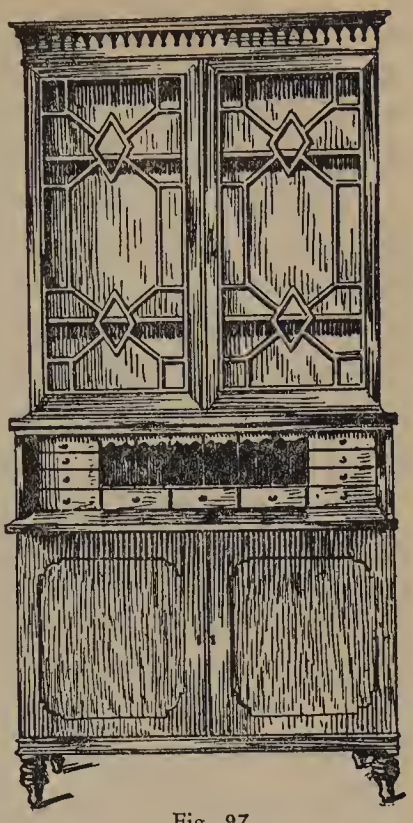


Fig. 97
HEPPLEWHITE
SECRETARY-BOOKCASE

The Adam brothers were architects, not furniture-makers, but they designed much furniture to fit their interior architecture, which was classically extreme.

Of the four brothers—John, Robert, James, and William—Robert Adam was the one of outstanding importance. An ardent lover of classic architecture, he was inspired with the idea of preserving what examples might remain of Greek and Roman dwellings. He therefore went with several assistant draftsmen to Dalmatia to study the ruins of the Palace of Diocletian, and although arrested as a spy, he managed to leave the country with enough detailed information to reconstruct the building completely in a series of drawings that were published in book form.

After the publication of his book he was appointed Architect to the King and took his brother James into partnership. Their work is easily recognized because of the extreme refinement and delicacy of the classic motives, rendered most typically in stucco. In effect an Adam room suggests a blend of the styles of Louis XVI and Pompeii, garnished with Wedgwood in the manner of Della Robbia.

Their most elaborate rooms look like the hall of Greek sculpture in every museum: Niches holding full-sized marble copies of the statues of the Pantheon and inset samples of Greek and Roman motifs. Ceilings coffered, and a pure Greek cornice. Smaller rooms had ceilings completely covered with

arabesques and inset with medallions of Wedgwood pottery, or paintings, or the inevitable plaster bas-reliefs of vases, griffins, and sheep skulls, trimmed round about with endless chains of garlands known as "husks."

Furniture which they designed to match their interiors—but did not themselves manufacture—was very chaste in outline and very small in scale. It is invariably ornamented with acanthus-leaf designs, long and short-length flutes, and Greek motifs. Typical mantels are of white marble, with a rectagonal panel set in the center of its face, and with perpendicular grooves, called flutes, on either side. (Fig. 98.) Very often four or five of the flutes are stopped with inlays of contrasting marble—an effect that suggests the triglyphs of a Greek Doric frieze.

Adam design is always very precious and delicate. Every classic motive known is attenuated to the extreme of refinement. It was tremendously popular in America shortly before the World War—and for that matter it still is. In its entirety it is too fragilely intricate, too freezingly formal, for the typical American house; but a little of it is embellishing to any type of semi-formal room. An Adam mantel, or Adam doors with octagon panels, or arches or niches, or any of the details of their ornamentation added wherever taste suggests, are suitable.

Much of the Adam style is beautiful, dignified and distinguished. And yet, in its unskilled interpretation, it can become affectedly effeminate to a point where you feel that, like the heroines of Jane Austen, it is inclined to the "vapours!"

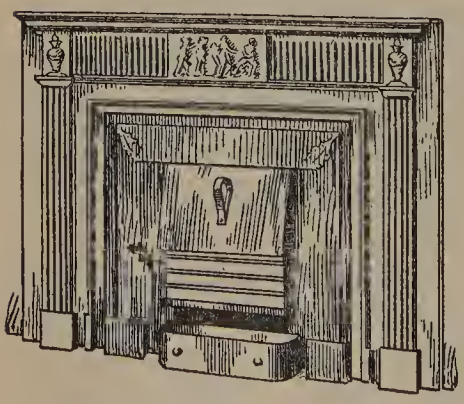


Fig. 98
ADAM MANTEL

5. THE COLONIAL HOUSE

You know, and I know, and we all know perfectly

well that the Colonial house is—speaking as the dictionary—a house built prior to the American Revolution. But to most of us it is an affectation to call the thousands of white-painted, green-shuttered frame houses of our villages and farms anything else.

A house of the Early—or Late—Republic means nothing to me whatsoever! Does it to you? To me every house built in the likeness of the Colonial houses of the late—or early—eighteenth century is "Colonial." Even the American Empire houses, and their furniture, built when we were doting on France and nursing our break with England, are Colonial—unless they are Georgian, which is even more so! Mansard, Neo-Gothic, mid-Victorian, General Grant, and Richardson Romanesque are various American styles that we went through in the interim between the Jacobean-Colonial-Georgian period of our early days and the triform completeness of its present renaissance.

There is so much about the Colonial house throughout this book that the few pages following are included merely to emphasize some differences of character in the typical styles that we call Colonial, no matter which their period or what their inspiration.

As noted elsewhere, our earliest truly Colonial houses of the North Atlantic seaboard were Puritan-plain, both inside and out. They were, moreover, pure Jacobean. On the outside they more or less duplicated the Scotch-Boardman house (Fig. 24). Inside, the walls were finished in rough plaster with all beams exposed. The big spinal beam (called the summer beam) crossed the ceiling from end to end, and the smaller rib-beams or joists were carried from the spine-beam to the frame of the walls. (Spine and ribs are not architectural terms, but I think they make the theory of the construction clear.) Often the underside of the second-story floor-boarding was left as it was, to make the ceiling of the first floor. Sometimes the spaces between the joists were plastered. The chimney-breast and the wall on either side were usually boarded over. There were always wide plank floors

and enormous fireplaces, with a heavy log set in the form of a lintel over the opening. Sometimes this beam was set flush with the wall, sometimes a portion of it protruded and served as a mantel-shelf.

The fireplaces in the kitchens had ovens built in at the side. Otherwise cooking was done over the open wood-fire. Sometimes one room, sometimes another was completely sealed in with wood. The old Capen house at Topsfield, Massachusetts, which is one of the historical and best-preserved examples of a seventeenth century house (it was built in 1683), has plastered walls in the parlor, and the open-beamed ceiling is whitewashed. The kitchen was sealed in with horizontally laid planks and windows with thirty panes.

Such houses as the John Ward house at Salem, the old part of the Whipple house at Ipswich, the Capen house and the Boardman house at Saugus, had full second stories; but in thousands of early American houses the bedrooms were little cubicles opening off the kitchen, or else they were unfinished attics, in which beds were set up among hangings of stored clothing and drying vegetables. There were, of course, no domestic conveniences in any of them. In short, the early American period house must be rather liberally adapted by any one intending to reproduce one now with an effect of charm—meaning that a modern range and electric ice-box as well as plenty of plumbing and closets must be tucked away behind doors conveniently near.

By the middle of the eighteenth century there were plenty of New England houses of size and architectural importance, such as the Hancock house in Boston; Cliveden in Germantown, Pennsylvania; the house of Jeremiah Lee at Marblehead, Massachusetts; and others which proclaim that their owners were provided with all the "elegance" known at that time to London. But since the character of the owner is inevitably expressed in his home, the typical New England houses remained (and still remain) rather Puritanical.

HOMES IN THE SOUTH WERE DIFFERENT

Meanwhile, in Maryland, Virginia, and especially in South Carolina, the planters of means—and there were many of them—lived on imposing estates in spacious houses built either of brick or of frame, with classic porticos or balconies with classic colonnades. Perhaps it was the friendliness of this balcony life, and of windows that opened full length, in contrast to the austerity of the closed shutters or pulled-down blinds of New England, which produced the impression of a wide difference between the spirit of the South and that of the North.

At all events, in the notable houses of the South, the rooms were large and high-studded, and the embellishment with Palladian, Jones, Wren, and Adam motives was lavishly applied. Classic cornices, pilasters, and pediments appeared in every principal room. Halls were often notable for the celebrated flying stairs. Beautiful mantels were either imported or copied by Colonial workmen, and furniture was—much of it—made by the notable cabinet-makers of London. The Southern planters also imported all varieties of stuffs, wall-papers and carpets. In fact, it was rather held against them by captious critics—among whom were many of their relatives in London—that they imported much that might quite easily have been made at home.

The object of this description is merely to point out the difference between the mode of life of the South and that of the North, because this difference still divides the personality of Northern and Southern houses to-day.

In New England the wives and daughters of the owners of impressive houses, quite likely, did much of the housework. In houses of average size, as often as not, they did all of it, and the most luxurious article of ease was a wood-backed armchair. The kitchen was the center of family life; the parlor was as uncomfortable as stiffness could make it—and never used by the family except to sit in for an hour or two on Sunday or for funerals or weddings. The parlor

of the Southern house was where the family spent their days when not on the veranda. Not only was the housework done by the slaves, but all the members of the family were waited on, hand and foot.

All of which means that in choosing a house of Northern or Southern type, you should consider the character that each connotes. The Southern Colonial house was as foreign to an expression of energy or thrift as the summer palace of a Sultan. Houses that are luxurious in style can not be run parsimoniously. Houses that are essentially formal can not depart from the exactions of that style. It is unsuitable, therefore, to choose a classic Georgian house, which is the expression of what the old writers always described as elegance, for the background of one who lives very simply—meaning without regard to form.

Whether in the North or the South or on the Mason and Dixon line precisely, the owner of classic marble floors neither scrubs nor polishes them. The George III tea service laid upon a Chinese Chippendale table is not carried in by the mistress of the house—nor by a servant who is lacking in the exactions of smartness or skill.

In the less pretentious Southern house, hospitality must be abundant, but the requirements of etiquette are not exacting if the service be adequate and courteous in intention. The simple type of Dutch or Puritan Colonial house, however, has no exactions of service at all—beyond the stipulation that if there be any, then let it be conducted with neatness and dispatch.

The conclusions are obvious: If you run your house to perfection in its every detail, then no background is more suitable than that of a formal example of Georgian. But if you are likely to fall short of perfection, then don't choose the one background that is more critical than any other in the world.

To have a perfect Georgian house is impossible on a small scale, because rooms of Georgian perfection should have a certain effect of space.

In its uttermost austerity, the Georgian house lacks homelike appeal, but in its chintz-and-flower-filled rendering, no other style can ever, in my own heart, take its place. But no compromise will do. It must be perfection—or it must be something else. Bad Georgian is like a misshapen Parthenon! On the other hand, a sweet, ordinary, every-day semi-Colonial or semi-French, semi-Italian, or any other type can be made into utterly contenting surroundings.

OUR PERSONAL LIKES AND DISLIKES

Some one said the other day that one must be born to the Georgian style and to the Russian language in order to be acclimated to either. Perhaps! Perhaps this is also true of all periods. There must be an inherent affinity between ourselves and the homes we are impelled to select.

It is inevitable that we should each of us feel a sympathy for a certain period inherited from American, English, French

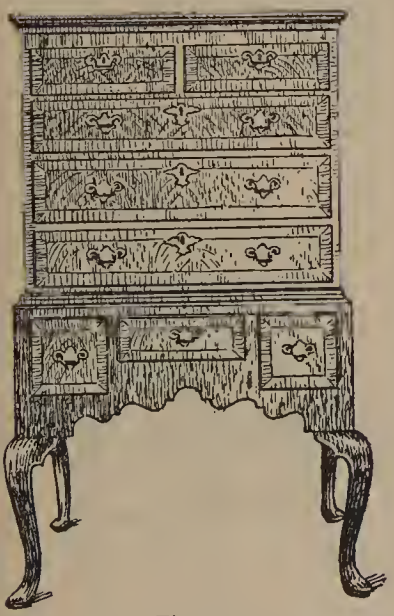


Fig. 99
TYPICAL HIGHBOY OF QUEEN ANNE ANCESTRY

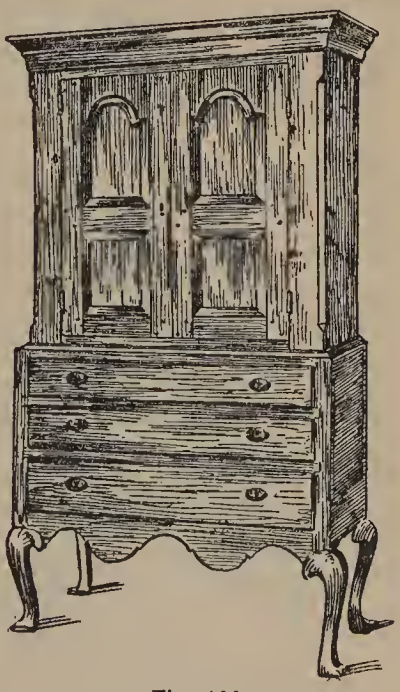


Fig. 100
OLD AMERICAN PINE HIGHBOY —QUEEN ANNE STYLE

Fig. 102
AMERICAN MAHOGANY HIGHBOY, CHIPPENDALE STYLE

Italian, Dutch, Spanish, German—or whatever other ancestors—that we can never feel for any other periods, unless we are so racelessly Modern that we care for nothing that antecedes today.

And in accumulating this innate preference (or its modernistic lack) we achieve a background that is truly and personally ours. Furniture manufacturers probably think that they launched a return of Colonial style! But it is quite as likely that the wide appeal and suitability of Colonial furnishing is due to the fact that hundreds of thousands of Americans are of Colonial ancestry. Colonial houses, therefore, comfort our sense of well-being as though bestowing upon us the blessings of our great-great-grandparents.

The examples given on these pages (Figs. 99, 100, and 101) are direct copies of Queen Anne. The mahogany highboy (Fig. 102) is in the best style of Chippendale, as is also the mahogany desk (Fig. 103). Louis XV is distinctly traceable in the rosewood and horsehair armchair that was so characteristic of our later Victorian—or General Grant—Period. (Fig. 104.)

Fig. 101
WINDSOR ARMCHAIR, FAN BACK

THE FURNITURE OF OUR OWN DUNCAN PHYFE

Having somewhat elaborated on the English cabinet-makers, it will hardly do to leave out our own preeminent Duncan Phyfe, who is rated very little behind—if not on a par with—the greatest of the Englishmen. The country of his birth was Scotland. His family migrated to America and settled among the Dutch of Albany when Phyfe was sixteen.

Fig. 103
TYPICAL COLONIAL DESK

Fig. 104
VICTORIAN CHAIR EVOLVED FROM LOUIS XV

Fig. 105
DUNCAN PHYFE CHAIR WITH LYRE BACK

He learned the trade of cabinet-maker and wood-carver in Albany. When he was still in his early twenties, he moved to New York and opened a shop of his own. He achieved immediate success—much as Chippendale had in London. Like Chippendale he took infinite pains in the selection of his mahogany and in the stability of his construction. His designs are more like those of Sheraton than of Chippendale, but he too perfected a Chippendale type of pedestal table with dog's paws in place of the Chippendale ball-and-claw feet. And just as Chippendale and Sheraton had gone to

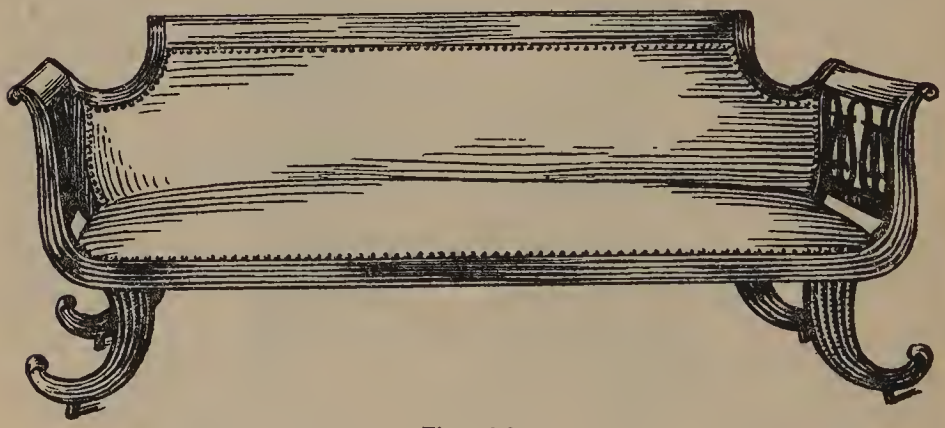


Fig. 106
DUNCAN PHYFE SOFA

Louis XIV and Louis XVI for much of their inspiration, Phyfe interpreted the Directoire Period of France almost exclusively.

Certain characteristics of his are very easily recognized, notably his use of the lyre (with strings of brass or whalebone) set into the backs of chairs, the arms of sofas (Figs. 105 and 106), or the pedestals of consoles. The acanthus leaf is on nearly every piece of furniture he made—not curled forward, as in the Corinthian Order, but laid flat and in bas-relief. The legs of his pedestal tables were embellished with the acanthus leaf laid along the upper surface tapering toward the foot (Fig. 108), the dog's paw of which was made of brass. On other pieces of furniture he substituted a carved eagle in place of the lyre.

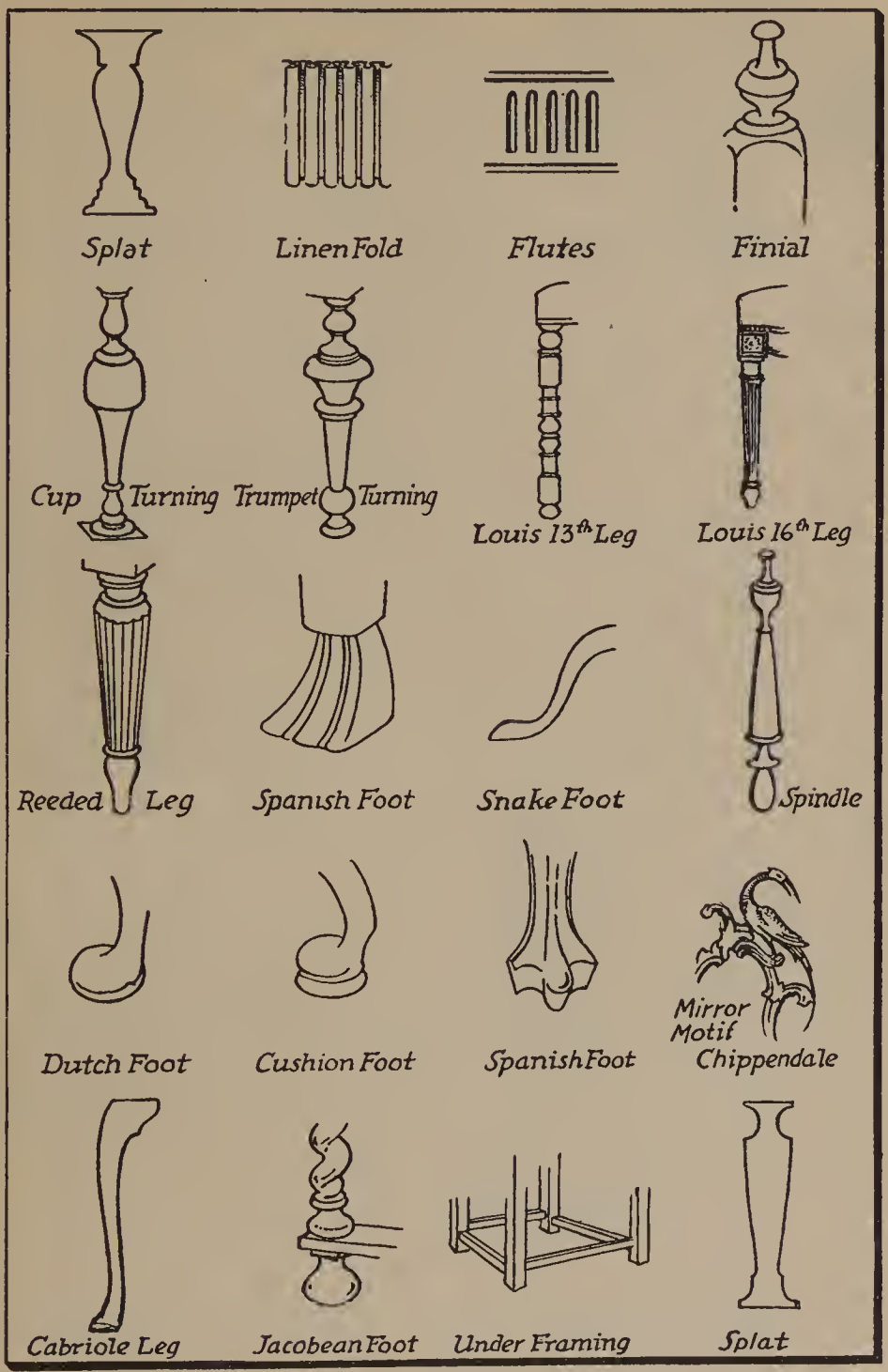


Fig. 107
ELEMENTS OF FURNITURE

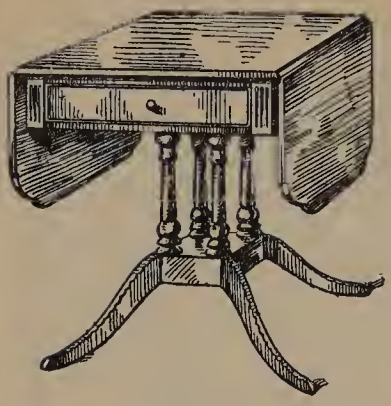


Fig. 108
DUNCAN PHYFE TABLE

Another characteristic of many of the chair and sofa frames is the reeded edge. He also made a most interesting form of trestle-table, with the top resting on four posts which rise from a platform supported on concave dog-footed legs. (Fig. 108.)

While Phyfe's furniture is extremely refined, it is strongly built. There is an insatiable demand for anything that could be attributed to him and his hundred or more assistants. Perhaps this is because his name is the rage. Perhaps, again, his name is the rage because his furniture fits perfectly into every imaginable type of American house which, rightly or wrongly, is known to us all as Colonial.

Of less concern in such a book as this, but of equal importance to students of American craftsmanship, are the beautiful examples of such masters as John Goddard of Newport, William Savery, the Philadelphia Quaker, and their associates and contemporaries.

Many critics consider William Savery the most worthy successor to Chippendale that America produced. And Goddard's block-front secretaries, highboys, and other pieces served as models for generations of conscientious craftsmen. At the moment we seem to care little for carving and nothing for pieces of substantial weight, which is, perhaps, the reason why the eighteenth-century cabinet maker in highest favor at the moment is Duncan Phyfe.

XIV

DECORATION IN PREPARATION FOR FURNISHING

THE definition of decoration is somewhat like the age of Anne and the size of a piece of cheese. On occasions interior decoration assumes the structural function of interior architecture; at other times it is limited to the making of curtains, the choosing of chintzes, and the color of paint.

Having in a previous chapter rather criticized the pretentions of a certain type of decorator, I would like to make it clear that criticism of the majority of decorators is in no way intended. There are uncountable numbers of them who have knowledge, originality, and taste; but it must also be repeated that those who are bad can be very bad indeed.

If the professional decorator were obliged to qualify for a diploma, as a graduate of the schools of law or medicine is required to do, or if he (or she) had to serve a long apprenticeship as student and draftsman, as an architect must do, that would give us a definite standard. But since every one is as free to open a decorating establishment as any other type of shop, the name "decorator" does not of itself furnish any assurance of qualification. This statement is easily confirmed by the veritable epidemic of young women who, without training or study or the least evidence of talent, seem to believe that, by gift of sex alone, they are qualified to print "Interior Decorator" on their cards, and conduct under their hats what sample-matching business they may.

Their ambitions are perhaps quite all right, but their deficiencies explain why you should put your house into the

hands of one in whose knowledge you have confidence. There is no point in choosing any other kind. Moreover, it may be as well to avoid the type of decorator whose talent is limited to the persistent repetition of a single idea that expresses only herself (or—but not so often—himself).

THE PERSONALITY OF THE OWNER IS OF FIRST IMPORTANCE

It must never be forgotten that in every house of appeal the owner's personality is the one of importance. If the house expresses the architect or the decorator and *not* the owner, then its personality is a song out of tune. John Singer Sargent, the greatest portrait-painter of his day, always interpreted the character and personality of his sitter. In the same way a decorator worthy of the name interprets the personality and character of the individual houseowner for whom he (or she) creates the setting.

A short time ago a notable architect and an equally notable decorator finished a house for a newly-rich man and his wife. As an example of the coldest, most restrained period of Georgian architecture, it was supremely beautiful. And had its owners been people of cold, intellectual formality, the work would have been flawless. But the wife was a plump, red-cheeked, enthusiastic, busy little woman, who liked to bake her own pies and churn her own butter, and who was really happiest with a dust-cap over her hair and a dust-cloth in her hands. The husband was also fat and jolly, and his idea of ease was sitting in shirt-sleeves and carpet-slippers. Consequently, they were unbecoming to the house, and the house was unbecoming to them.

Houses that exact formality, not merely of manner but of outlook, are the palatial types of the French Louis, the houses of Jones and Wren and Adam in England, the formal type of Italian "Villa," and the Georgian or severely classical Colonial.

None could feel at home in the formal restraint of these periods who are not innately formal and temperamentally

reserved. For instance, if you are uncomfortable unless you put on evening clothes for dinner; if you habitually sit straight in your chair, with hands folded in your lap; if you have naturally a certain unbendingness of spine, a Calvin Coolidge type of reserve, no matter how deep your sympathies may be; if, in other words, the exacting, fastidious refinements or the Puritanical principles of your ancestors are ingrained in your nature, then the wood-lined rooms of France or the spacious coldness of Georgian or the Classic type of Italian will doubtless be becoming to your personality, and you to theirs.

But if you and your family's traditions have come from the unhampering life of the "wide open spaces," and if you like to sit down at dinner without preparations other than washing your face and hands and smoothing your hair, your house should properly have an effect of straightforward, uncluttered, but homelike hospitality; plenty of broad windows, heavy-timbered beams, oak wainscots, or rough-plastered walls, and generally comfortable and unspoilable furniture of Spain or Italy or Old England. You could equally well choose Normandy French, Peasant Spanish, Farmhouse Italian, or Primitive Colonial, using these names merely for descriptive convenience (in no way intending them to be meticulously exact). Or you could choose a house of any nonperiod of "adapted" American. It could be of important size, and filled with every object of greatest luxury, but it should not suggest the use-me-not-roughly quality of the styles listed in the classic category.

MANY WAYS OF APPROACHING THE DECORATION AND FURNISHING OF A HOUSE

To follow a Period is the least personal and the least difficult way to insure a safe result—granted sufficient wherewithal. In its most commonplace phase this method consists in straight reproduction. Select this room or that house and copy it—if not exactly, at least approximately. Furnish it

with examples—either real or copied—of its Period, and carry this idea throughout. The process is as mechanical as following a recipe in a cookery book, and the result is, at worst, a pale, sad failure, or at best a success much like that of a well-baked pan of biscuits.

The haphazard way, while not likely to result in beauty, may quite well have personality. This way, as its name suggests, is simply putting whatever you happen to have into whichever rooms you happen to occupy, and letting them all agree or disagree, as may happen to suit them.

The personal method of furnishing is to build each room on those objects that belong to each of us; things that would subtract from the sum of our personality were they taken away. What is really essential—granting that we have a fair amount of taste—is that we shall put together the things we like; the things that we are used to; the things that express us; so that our homes shall be a true expression of our own taste, character, and personality.

And yet, if beauty is our object, it is necessary—usually—that we select those of our possessions which will be becoming to the unity of a decorative scheme. A certain few persons who have for years been eliminating and collecting may be able to move, or to do over the house, and make no change in their possessions; but for them a book such as this is of no use, anyway!

THE BURLAP OF SENTIMENT

Most of us who are moving or refurnishing, however, are surrounded with old familiar objects that are completely wrapped in the burlap of sentiment, so that we do not see them as they are at all. For example, I am told by no less an authority than Mr. Frank Alvah Parsons that mahogany doors set in a white Georgian wall are very bad. And I feel that my expression is very like that of a terrier that has been told "No!" As a matter of fact, I have no idea of putting mahogany doors in a house of my own—at the mo-

ment. I happen to like doors that match their trim much better.

But the memory of a house of long ago is still—notwithstanding my faith in Mr. Parsons—utterly beautiful. It had two drawing-rooms architecturally alike, with cream-painted walls and Ionic pilasters supporting a perfectly proportioned cornice. And it had hugely tall mahogany doors—with matched grain down their centers. The furniture was Sheraton—I have some of it still—and over two consoles were lovely gilt mirrors about six feet high by thirty inches wide, topped with fish-tailed horns of plenty. They are in my study now.

But in contrast to these few objects which I *know* are beautiful, are other things that I have difficulty in dissociating from sentiment. Perhaps they are good—perhaps they are not good at all. But I like them. And home would not be home to me without them—nor would others recognize my rooms as really mine, were I to put newly picked-up acquaintances in their places (which I have no intention of doing).

Other possessions required no effort of renunciation to send to auction, or leave in attic or stable loft. Perhaps paintings of cows and old grizzled-faced men with pipes, and full-sized marble copies of Vatican statuary might fit somewhere, some day—but I doubt it!

Statuary is extreme, I admit. Nevertheless, it is necessary to look at your own equivalent statuary possessions with a reasonable degree of criticism. If the house is big enough to allow you a treasure museum in which you can put grandmother's marble-topped walnut furniture, and grandfather's portrait—which no member of the family would have, because it was such a bad one—and the desk you had as a child, and the nursery mantel ornaments of cherubs in a field of forget-me-nots, and all the Christmas and birthday this-and-thats given to you by—you can't even remember whom—that is one thing. But to put them *all* into a room you would make beautiful, is another—and rarely feasible.

Therefore, you must select—not necessarily the things that a professional appraiser would put the highest value on, but the things that would grieve you to part with. Take these things as the nucleus of each room into which they are to go, and then build a background that is becoming to them. This is the perfect way; in fact, the only way to make the atmosphere of your house express YOU.

Meaning that if you have a small Sheraton desk and two Hepplewhite chairs, a pair of Sèvres vases, a little Tanagra figure, a Ming Bowl, a Chantilly inkstand, and an Elizabethan table, you could fit all these things—barring the table—into a house that is Georgian, or French, or Colonial—or that is just a comfortable house. But the heavy table would be out of harmony. Not because its name is Elizabethan, but because it is out of scale. A small Elizabethan piece might fit perfectly, as we shall see when we come to the problems of Interior Furnishings. (See Index.)

THE PROCESS OF DECORATION

It is high time, however, to consider the process of decoration. Whether an interior is the work of an architect, of a decorator, of the owner alone, or of all three, there are four distinct steps in the completion of each room in every house:

First—The architectural embellishment or preparation for the decoration.

Second—Completion of all walls, ceilings and floors that have been left unfinished by the builder or architect, and all actual decoration of interior surfaces with color; also selection of lighting fixtures, hardware and mantels, when these have not been supplied by the architect.

Third—The selection and supplying of movable objects of furniture.

Fourth—Placing furniture in an inviting and convenient arrangement, and supplying the accessories of ornament and comfort.

Architectural embellishment of the interior was the subject of Chapter IX. The subject of this chapter is the completion and decoration of the immovable interior. Let us begin, therefore, with the walls.

THE WALLS

Leaving all thought of Periods out of the question, the texture and detail as well as color of the walls must be in harmony with the furnishings that are to be used. For instance, rough-surface walls must not be chosen for fine-surface furniture, although smooth (plaster) walls can be used as a background for crude furniture.

An overlarge and overhigh room as plain as the inside of a cardboard box would be unendurable. In a room of great size, there should be an ornamented ceiling or vaulting supported on brackets or columns, or at least an important cornice as well as hangings of some sort in the biggest wall spaces. Moreover, the necessity for decoration increases in proportion to size—especially to height. Roughness of wall surfaces may increase also in proportion to size of wall space.

The one warning to those having rough-finished walls is to beware of gobby surfaces or smeary mixtures of color. A sandy and rough-troweled finish is good as a background for very heavy, somewhat crude furniture, and for coarse textures of hangings. But the smaller the rooms, the smoother the walls must be. Those intended as background for eighteenth-century furniture *must* be smooth. Moreover, unpainted plaster, either rough or smooth, does not look well as a background for such furniture as that of Hepplewhite, Sheraton, or Duncan Phyfe. Smooth plaster that is painted is entirely proper, whether paneled or left plain.

The perfect background for furniture of fineness is wood paneling, such as we find in typical French rooms, or in rooms that are Georgian or Colonial (described in Chapter XIII). Wood-lined rooms are either waxed and left light, or acid-stained and filled. Or else they are painted in a solid

color—perhaps with moldings accentuated with a relieving shade. Bedrooms or small rooms designed in lighter vein have panels, the frames of which often are striped in several colors —a fashion that is rather more decorator-like than home-like. But if you like it, there is no objection, unless perhaps it looks somewhat tricked out and therefore self-conscious.

Beautiful wall-paneling can be made of plaster that is painted as though it were wood. It is fine in texture and can be rendered in every type of molding and carved ornament at much less cost than wood. There is an interesting Portland cement composition that imitates various woods—notably old black oak beams, and paneling of what looks like age-old pine. This last has an effect of worn-off paint that has real charm. The cost, set up, paneled and with surfaces completely finished is about $1.50 a square foot.

IF YOU CAN PAINT

Comparatively few houses of average size and cost have any decorated rooms, but if you can paint—really paint—then the variety of decorations that you can do are limited only by the amount of wall space and the versatility of your imagination. If you can't, and you very much want a specially decorated room, you can of course give the commission to an artist—which is never quite the same as being able to do it yourself. Artists are temperamental. They paint (naturally) what *they* feel, which may or may not be what *you* want.

However, given a wood-embellished room with smooth plaster panels or insets (the kind of wall that must be decorated), and a theme such as a tapestry, that is to occupy one wall, or a picture or panel that serves as a decorative suggestion, the possibilities are that a painter who has any flair for decoration will produce a room of charm.

An enchanting room can be made by enlarging old prints of whaling scenes, or prints of New York in its village days, or any other old or modern, American or foreign pictures

Firm of Kenneth M. Murchison, Architects

THE DRAWING-ROOM-LIVING-ROOM IN THE AUTHOR'S NEW YORK APARTMENT

[PLATE 26]

Arthur C. Holden and Associates, Architects

A COLONIAL ROOM OF COMFORT AND QUALITY THAT WOULD BE EQUALLY SUITABLE IN AN ENGLISH OR PROVENÇAL HOUSE

[PLATE 27]

that can be enlarged to four, six, or eight times their size. A not impossible thing to have done well, because wall decoration is much less exacting than pictures hung in frames.

An architect I know well ornamented his study with two long wall panels (somewhat in the Botticelli manner) showing the daily life of his family. He called them "scenes of reality and fancy." The first caricatured all the members of his family at their exaggerated worst; the second showed beautifully angelic images of them at their own fancied best. As a contrast, the first background was autumn, and the second spring. It was this painting that I had in mind when I put the "if" into "if you can paint."

Even if you can't really paint at all, you can do much with transfer designs by choosing them wisely and using them sparingly. Wall-paper motives cut out—possibly from several papers—then combined and pasted, contain many possibilities. The whole wall may then be shellacked.

At all events, let your walls—if they are to be different from the ordinary, every-day, plain-painted, papered or pine-lined ones—express not merely your taste but your idiosyncrasies. I said this once to a member of my family who was having maps put all over the walls of her husband's study. Her husband, as it happens, cares as little for geography as the boy at the foot of the class in this subject at school. She replied that he cared only for engines, and that she couldn't have the walls painted with engines! *Of course* she could have—and beautifully! Only, again, she would have had to find not merely a blue-print draftsman, but an artist who could translate engines and their complications into half-clouded-over dreams.

A room of personality is ideally an interpretation of its owner's characteristics and taste. To fill your rooms with books that you know you will never open, rather than with those you like, or to block a small room with a piano if you care nothing for music, or to make a collection of boat models if you know nothing about boats and have no love for the sea, or to surround yourself with objects that in

nothing suggest your habits or your tastes, is to produce the same impression of misfit as if you wore a mask and wig.

To decorate the walls of a personal room with pictures of sports or gardens or scenes that you love—even to do small wall-spaces in a theme of lambs and bulls and bears and ticker-tape, the city sky-line (a silhouette, by the way, that is not too difficult) or a theme suggested by whatever you really take an interest in—is far more personable than to depend on conventional decorations. And the possibilities are endless. There is a theme in almost everything you do, or are, or take an interest in, that is decoratively interpretable if you have ingenuity enough to devise the way. Naturally, such self-expression carried to extremes is not meant for general use—unless the theme is a general one, and really well done. The suggestion is inserted here because dressing-rooms, studies, upstairs halls, and small rooms—particularly those in unexacting houses—are so often blanks of lost opportunity.

AVERAGE WALL DECORATION

To return, however, to the more impersonal and average decoration of our walls. Appealingly characteristic of our early American Period is the room that is paneled across the width of the wall occupied by the chimney, and the rest of the room papered above the chair-rail. Below the chair-rail, either there is paneling or the wall is painted. Paneling is often made of wide boarding, with or without doors leading to chimney-cupboards. But it is also made of narrow sections like those in shutters and doors. In fact, old inside shutters (that were solid) and old doors that may be bought of the house-wrecking companies and fitted together by sawing off the front section of the frame with the knob in it, make delightful interiors at fairly reasonable cost.

An inexpensive effect of wainscot is made by merely papering above the chair-rail, and painting the plaster below to match the trim. (See Plate 54.) The reverse of this, which

is much in favor in Georgian houses, is painting the wall a plain color above the chair-rail, and marbling or putting a marble paper below. In the second instance, the chair-rail is marbled as well as the base-board; in the first, the chair-rail is painted to match the trim. In the Colonial house the trim is either white or cream or whitish blue. In modern decoration the trim is painted to match the background of the wall-paper—a fashion that is very attractive; so attractive, in fact, that it is to be recommended for all simple, not too strictly period interiors, as well as for all rooms—elaborate and otherwise—that are painted.

A KITCHEN WALL

Before leaving the subject of wall-trimming, there may be a suggestive idea in the stencils in the kitchen on Plate 42. This wall was finished with the shiniest white enamel paint to be had, with the result that it looked beautifully clean, but cold and bare as the inside of an empty ice-box. So I sent for a stencil and painted through the design with bright blue lacquer, as can be seen in the picture. To space the stencils evenly I used a cardboard box-lid—using two corners and the center of the opposite side as a guide to measure by—and painted it myself. It took less than an hour's time to do the whole room. Any wall that must be washable can easily be done the same way. (For similar suggestions see Children's Rooms.)

Besides the unlimited ways of decorating walls, or paneling or trim, there are of course hundreds of methods of embellishment that can be added to a room; embellishment of ceiling, of floor, of doors; addition of niches and lunettes, of cupboards and bookcases, of recessed or framed-in windows, or over-doors, of wainscot or frieze, of mirrors or paintings, or of wall-paper set in panels over the mantel or over doors. Modern insets of bas-relief, painting under the glass of mirrors, inserting glass-faced trenches for electric lights, and scattered fragments of shelving, see Chapter XXII.

WALL-PAPERS

The question of wall-papers depends entirely upon whether you are one of the many who like them, or one of the few who do not. Personally, I think nothing takes their place in certain country rooms and in many types of others. In fact, the homelike decorative value of wall-papers is almost immeasurable.

Paper wall-hangings were originally made to take the place of tapestries and stuffs that were beyond the medium purse. The "Domino" papers which are associated with Italy —where papers of the same variety are still for sale—were actually first made by a group of men in Rouen, though the idea originated with the small diaper-patterned and marbled papers that were made in Italy for book-linings. These papers came in small sheets that were sold by the ream—or the quire. They were somewhat disjointed in effect because the design of each square made no attempt to fit the pattern of its neighbors.

Gradually improvements were made; Papillon in France devised the modern continuous design, and his successor invented blocks for printing the separate colors instead of stenciling them by hand. The next step was the making of picture-papers. The first of these were made by Reveillon in Paris, and were intended to simulate the painted panels that were in vogue. Later the Zuber, Dufour and Leroy manufacturers began making the scenic papers. Most of these are out of print, but a few are still to be had. The Zuber factory is still printing "Scenic America," "Eldorado," and "Isola Bella" from the old blocks, and there are also a number of others, both old and new, on the market. They are necessarily expensive, because hundreds of blocks are used, each of which must be stamped by hand, a tedious and time-taking process. One wishes that many of the others—especially those of Leroy—might be reproduced.

The only criticism of scenic papers is that they are apt to attract attention to themselves rather than to serve their

purpose as a background. The answer to which is to feature them instead. In halls, reception-rooms, dining-rooms, and even in bedrooms, they are utterly enchanting when they are made the center of interest and nothing is put against them.

It must, of course, be remembered, because it is important, never to hang objects on a scenic paper; neither side-fixtures nor mirrors—nor anything else. A scenic paper must be treated as though it were a painting, which, from a decorative standpoint, it is.

WALL-PAPER SET INTO PANELS

This looks very well if the background of the paper and the color of the paneling is the same. But too great a contrast is apt to be disturbing—and very few designs are important enough to warrant disturbance. Scenic wall-paper panels such as those printed by Leroy, being shellacked and treated, have all the decorative quality of paintings. But even so they look best when framed in a neutral color of brown grays or sea-weed green. (This applies to paneling only, not to panoramic walls, which are best in a room of cream or putty-white.) Paper panels in sepia look well in wood surroundings because they have the same tone. Gray and white panels look best in a room painted French gray.

There are wall-papers for all rooms in all colors and for all moods. For Italian rooms, there are the flock papers that look exactly like materials. For English and French and American houses of importance, there are hand-painted Chinese papers of the seventeenth century, which are, needless to say, worth a fortune—as are also some of the scenic papers that have long been out of print. But there are thousands of modern papers and rooms to be made with them that are unlimited in possibilities.

For about twenty-five years or so, papers were little used. The best houses were paneled and white-painted. Then apartment buildings and hotels habitually imitated paneling by

fastening squares of picture molding on plaster walls, that were then painted taupe or cream or sand color. Lately has come the mania for painting every room light green or robin's-egg blue.

A very pale gray-blue, by the way, was quite as typical of the old Colonial interior as the white which we unfailingly associate with it. Whether paint was mixed this color deliberately, as in the Woodbury Room in the American Wing at the Metropolitan Museum in New York, I do not happen to know. But I remember very well that whitewash used in Maryland when I was a child was more blue than white. At all events, the present fashion for blue walls is merely a return of an old custom and not a new taste.

The reverse of the usual order of colored paper with white trim, is to paper the wall above the chair rail with a flowered paper on a white ground, and then paint the doors and trim and dado in a dominant color of the paper's design. Leaf-green is perhaps most usual, but delphinium-blue, mallow-pink, or any of the high light tints are chosen frequently.

An effective decoration for a small dressing-room, or for a woman's bedroom, is to panel the walls with paper molding. Many moldings and other designs suitable for bandings are made by all wall-paper manufacturers.

AT PRESENT IT IS PINE

At the moment, every room is either beautifully or badly sealed in with pine. It does not matter so much about details or the quality of the wood—pine walls we must have. And, because they are in fashion, they look well, of course. Some of them are really lovely. In this book are many illustrations of them—lovely ones, all. Wood lining can be entirely attractive, made of plain planks (flat boards). But do not use matchboards on the side that shows beading! In a room that is a reconstructed barn interior, let the studs and braces show, and plaster roughly in between.

THE MOST VULGAR WALLS POSSIBLE

There are various plastic materials that, properly used. give excellent results; but improperly used, they are ——! In fact, the way to make the most vulgar interior possible to imagine, would be to take plastic paints of two or three colors, stir them around until they streak, smear the mixture all over a wall, and brush it into a rough surf effect; or else press a mortar-board against it and pull off at right angles, making a series of volcanoes and craters. A third horror, which might be called the confectioner's nightmare, is to put soft plaster in a bag and squeeze it through a fancy tin nozzle, as confectioners squeeze icing! I have not made this up, I promise you; I was actually shown a room decorated in wobbling spirals all around the doors and window-frames, with rosettes applied at intervals! In a confectioner's store, cake-icing rickrack walls might be suitably amusing, but as the decoration of a house such gobby trimming is, needless to say, equal to ipecac.

Let it be added that the vulgarity of such results is the fault not of the materials but of their misuse. Perhaps, in a certain crude type of room, plaster or plastic paint skilfully applied might simulate old wood-carving. It is, after all, not so much the *what* we use, as the *how* we handle it, that makes the difference between good and bad.

COLORED PLASTERS AND CEMENTS

There is no possible objection to plaster that is colored before it is applied and thereby performs the operation of plastering and painting at the same time. Plaster that is colored all the way through is, moreover, far more durable than that which is white and then painted, since a nick in the surface will not be proclaimed by a fleck of white. Many tinted cements make ideal surfaces. One that is of cream or fawn color can be made to look like stone that has been rain-washed to ivory smoothness. A huge dining-room in Penn-

sylvania has such walls as these, with casement windows, on either side of which hang Elizabethan crewel work on sand-colored linen—slightly darker than the walls. The ceiling is timbered, the floor set with tiles in a russet monochrome. The furniture is of Elizabethan oak, with cushions of worsted damask in a tone of burnt orange.

In this same sort of room, on a smaller scale, William and Mary or Spanish peasant or primitive Italian furniture would look equally well with a wooden floor of varied-width planks, a Scotch worsted rug, and cotton-print hangings and cushions in color and design to suit the furniture.

The coarse linens printed in what are called Tudor designs—or more expensively those which simulate the needlework of early England—go equally well with plaster walls or with oak or other wood paneling.

FLOORS IN GENERAL

But before considering hangings, which properly belong in the next chapter, it is essential that we first finish the floors. Proper preparation for whichever type of floor is to be used is a necessary item that the architect attends to when the floor joists are laid and the distance to the floor level calculated.

For a stone or brick paving, for instance, the subfloor must be not only sturdy but low-set, so that the finished surface shall not rise above those of the surrounding rooms. A thin flooring, such as parquetry or what might be called a hardwood veneer, on the contrary, takes very little space. Certain varieties of flooring are thick, and others are thin; neither those which stand up too high nor those which have to be laid on lathing to make them high enough, are to be compared with those laid on a subfloor properly prepared.

In other words, the type of material to be used for the floors must be decided before the house is built or remodeled. Details as to the variety of planking or the pattern of parquetry or tile to be used, can, of course, be decided later.

It is merely necessary that heavy floors be thoroughly supported and that space be left for thick or thin ones, accordingly.

Harking back to Periods (as is our fixed habit), we instinctively pigeonhole tiles as set apart for Spanish houses, marble for Georgian or Italian ones, stone flagging for Gothic, brick for certain primitive varieties of the above, and wood of one kind or another for all the rest. As a matter of fact, each material may have great latitude of use if properly chosen. Moreover, there are endless composition floorings, many of them suitable for equally endless uses.

THE WOOD FLOOR

Since it is the material that is most often used, let us begin our detailed description with the wood floor, which is actually banned from no house—not even the Spanish. It is more suitable to every other type of house than to this particular one, of course; but I have seen wooden floors in Spanish houses—many of them. Wood floors are, of course, typical of every house in England—except those that antedate the period of Elizabeth—and of every house in France later than the Gothic; also of all the houses that we call American.

The ideal Colonial floor is of planks—of pine, usually—that vary from eighteen to twenty-four inches in width. It is difficult sometimes to find a local lumber-yard that supplies wide boarding, but every builder knows where to send for it. A contractor got some yellow-pine floor-boards a few days ago that are twenty-four inches wide.

It is not necessary to get more than a few very wide boards, for these can be mixed with those of twelve or ten inches. Odd widths of wood make an ideal flooring for all primitive or unsophisticated styles of houses.

The floor of an English house should be of oak—preferably cut straight with the grain—in as wide boards as can be procured. The filler should be made of powdered quartz

and transparent varnish mixed to a paste. This is used on all woods that have any porous openings in their grain, and is necessary to produce a porcelain smooth-finish. Colored filler is proper on occasions, but it should never be strong in contrast on a wood such as oak.

Perhaps if it were treated differently a quartered-oak floor might be admitted to a house in good taste. But in its vulgarized display of dark-brown hatchings on a green-yellow background, and the whole made glass-shiny with varnish, it has few equals as a despoiler of distinction. Cut with the grain and with a colorless filler, oak is not only the most durable of American woods, but is beautiful as well.

There is no objection to having it stained, but it must avoid the greenish mud-and-mustard tones. Boarding of second and third grade is apt to vary in color. In very primitive houses this variation—if not too pronounced—is rather pleasing—especially in a floor that has arrows or pegs of wood set in in purposely contrasting colors. (Lighter boards pegged with darker pegs and the darker boards pegged with lighter ones.) But usually the floors are stained to an even match.

Cypress, maple, ash, elm, poplar, redwood, spruce, and most of the pines are all beautiful woods for floors, as well as for trim and for wood walls. Chestnut, birch, cedar and all the fruit woods are much used for walls.

Usually the wood is acid-stained—unless you want to keep it light. After this it is filled, and the surface is waxed. A less expensive method, with a quicker result, is to varnish —and perhaps finish with wax—and perhaps not. The most beautiful finish possible is obtained by using nothing but wax —and elbow-grease. The perfect floor—of any wood—is waxed and polished, and waxed and polished for days, weeks, months, years—until, at the end of a lifetime or two, the surface that we call patined is achieved! This is really more for furniture than for floors, which look very beautiful when filled and waxed in moderation. A less expensive floor finish —and one that is much in use, is a thin coat of varnish and then a few polishings with wax.

In a house of perfect finish, such as a French one, for instance, or a beautifully detailed Colonial one, the floors are made of narrow boards of oak (*not* quartered), maple, butternut, walnut, chestnut, or yellow pine, laid herring-bone or in one of the simpler patterns of parquetry.

THE PAINTED FLOOR

The painted floor is most suitable and becoming to all the simpler houses of Colonial suggestion—let us not restrict ourselves definitely to pure Colonial!

From personal experience, I have found that the most durable floors are those painted *light* in color. Dark ones painted night-blue or bottle-green or brown, or even those which are in the brighter colors of primary and binary hues that are scarcely grayed, show every dusty footprint and are marred by every heel-mark. Moreover, the floor-nails of old floors have a habit of gradually declaring their whereabouts with small light-colored polka-dots. Light sand—about the color of an average manila envelope—is one of the most durable and unmarkable of colors. And as the woodwork is apt to be white or cream, a sand-colored floor is quite as dark as necessary for a feeling of security. (The tendency of a too-light floor is to rise like an elevator.) Other very good —possibly even better—colors are very light gray-green, leaf-green, and green-blue.

The painted floor is usually finished with a thin coating of waterproof varnish, but the most beautiful ones are finished with enamel paint, and then thoroughly dried, waxed, and polished. A floor that is black or night-blue must be very highly polished. Very light floors look very well flat.

THE PATTERN-PAINTED FLOOR

An amusing way to paint a wood floor is in imitation of marble blocks. The floor is laid in even planks about ten inches wide. Each board is marked off in ten-inch squares and

then painted in two colors like a checker-board. Rather more effective is the drawing of diagonal lines instead of straight ones, and making diamond-shaped lozenges. For a hall, paint them white and black, or white and night-blue or bottle-green. Black usually looks best. Another pattern is made by using a ten-inch board and a two-inch board alternately. Paint the narrow boards one color and then two two-inch bands crossways, completing the squares, and painting the ten-inch blocks left in the center another color. In any case, these block-painted floors must be polished to the highest degree. Other old Colonial floors were painted dark red or brown, and then a very small device, such as a bell or a lozenge or a star, was stenciled on at intervals. A spattered floor is even more typical.

Floors of rooms other than halls are best painted in quiet wood tones, such as the varying shades of light and dark mahogany, red-wood, walnut, all in solid color. Sometimes checker-boards are painted in slight variegations not evenly spaced. A floor of somewhat pinkish-orangeish brown, evolved from not very colorful autumn leaves, can make an intriguing floor of a pleasant, mellow quality hard to describe.

A floor that matches the furniture—or at least the majority of it—is always safe. In a bedroom that has much maple or birch or mahogany furniture, a floor of maple or birch or mahogany looks wonderfully well. A floor set like a wood pavement has possibilities in a house of such primitive type that it might have its floors set with bricks or cobblestones.

MARBLE FLOORS

Floors of marble are supremely beautiful in all types of formal houses. Those laid in special designs are very expensive—but so are formal houses!

This reminds me that no word in the American language is more often misapplied than "formal." The meaning of the word, in the sense of etiquette, is ceremonious; in architec-

ture and decoration, it means classic. Therefore, let us repeat that a Georgian hall—if it be formal—is paved with marble. There is no substitute for marble.

Linoleum laid on a floor where marble is *suitable* is unthinkable. Far better—and, in fact, quite properly—change the word "formal" to "house of beauty or dignity," and put down a floor of wood. By which is not meant that formal characteristics are necessary to perfection. Far from it! It means merely that the word defines certain limitations. If it is formal then it must be kept in character. If it is not—well, then it is not! Perhaps you like red, or perhaps you like blue. But there is little sense in painting a sample of red and labeling it blue.

TILE FLOORS

Tile floors are suitable to many houses. Many have beautifying qualities. Many others are too beauty-destroying for words. The smooth-glazed ones in the terra-cotta, russet, or wood-brown shades make perfect floors in all varieties of plaster-walled rooms and loggias. The high-glazed ones that come in gorgeously brilliant peacock, emerald, amethyst, turquoise, amber, and so on, *can* be delightful on bathroom or loggia floors, and possibly in other rooms; they suggest innumerable possibilities, and yet—how seldom do they fulfil them!

Mosaic tiles that suggest Bulgarian embroidery are difficult to handle because of their disconnected restlessness and insistence upon attracting attention to themselves. There are exceptions to nearly all rules, but on general principles the floor should be considered as the earth on which we construct or into which we plant—a mere foundation upon which we build.

In small spaces, such as the facing of a fireplace or the risers of certain types of stairs, Spanish, Majolica or Dutch tiles are suitable and effective—if you like them and can adjust their surroundings to their colors. (See Index.) Those

in monochrome design, such as the Dutch, are suitable as facings for colonial fireplaces, but are never used on floors. Persian tiles do not go very well in average rooms, and the kaleidoscopic tiles which so passionately trim so many Hispanic-American houses and patios can certainly not be admitted to a house that is French, English or American-Georgian. But plain, smooth tiles that are softly dark in color can be used—and have been used—in utterly beautiful English and almost any other type of house.

An attractive substitute for tiles can be made by painting an ordinary cement floor in a pattern, each tile outlined with a narrow band of gray (to look like cement) and each tile painted with rather thin oil paint in whichever colors you please. When finished cover with several coats of valspar or other waterproof varnish, and then wax. The only flaw in such decoration is that it will not stand hard footwear, but where there are rugs or runners to walk on it will do perfectly for the not-usually-walked-on edges of a hall or a room.

Stone paving or brick flooring looks well in Gothic or other very old period houses. But these surfaces are torturing to most women to walk over. Highly waxed floors covered with small rugs are slippery unless you use the anti-skid material that comes for the purpose of holding small rugs steady. It can be bought in any furniture or dry-goods store and looks like a dull-faced thin oilcloth. You cut a piece the size of each rug, lay it on the floor, put the rug on top of it, and it sticks to the floor as tightly as though it were glued.

THE KITCHEN FLOOR

You may imagine, if you are a man—or if you are a woman who has not happened to think about it—that a tile floor in a kitchen and pantry and laundry is perfection. In the laundry it is not so bad, because a thick rug can be laid in front of the tubs and in front of the ironing table, and a laundress need not walk about very much—

unless she heats her irons on a stove instead of using electric ones. But in the kitchen and pantry, never! It would be no more inhuman to ask your servants to sleep on stone beds than to make them walk and stand all day on stone or tile floors. Not only are they torturing because of their hardness, but their coldness is actually endangering to health.

CORK AND LINOLEUM

The best kitchen and pantry floor in the world is linoleum—the thicker the better. Painted oilcloth over a wood floor is perfectly satisfactory, except that its surface wears through; the linoleum that is inlaid is really worth the difference in the cost.

Cork is a perfect floor to stand on and when laid in a parquetry pattern, scraped and waxed, it makes a beautiful floor for any room in place of wood. It must, however, be very smooth and highly polished. The color of cork is not half as pretty in a kitchen or pantry as linoleum. In a kitchen of my own (not illustrated in this book), the floor is so pretty that I cannot stop looking at it whenever I see it. It is of inset tile in a monochrome of bright and light blues, and is resiliently soft to walk over.

Some day perhaps the barrier of fastidious taste against linoleum for the front part of the house may be lifted, because it is a colorful and serviceable floor covering. But in the fashionable world it belongs in the kitchen, the laundry, the pantry and the servants' hall. With a rug on top of it, it goes in a simple country bathroom. It is excellent also in the children's play-room. Those who have no prejudice and whose friends have no prejudice can of course use it as and where they see fit.

Once long ago, in Spain, leather was stretched on the floor. I have often thought how marvelous linoleum made like tree-calf or morocco could be with tiny patterns (like tooling) stamped in gold. Or linoleum of dark blue with occasional silver stars. It would be perfect in a library or

a man's room—if its quality suggested that of tooled levant book-bindings. In other words, why do the linoleum makers not use it for a material it resembles (as the cork manufacturers have done) instead of as a substitute for tile and marble and rugs which it in nothing resembles?

HARDWARE

Another detail of the house that should be finished before the furniture is assembled, is the hardware. Thousands of people who pay the greatest amount of attention to the details of walls and floors and the Period of their furniture, think of the hardware not at all. Which is very like putting on beautiful clothes and their accessories and forgetting to brush one's hair.

Door-knobs of bad design and cheap finish cheapen the whole room. Window-catches are not important unless they are handles and rod-bolts on casement windows.

It is the easiest thing in the world to find certain Period styles of good hardware. One can find lovely Colonial knobs and knockers, box-locks and old Colonial hinges, and hand-wrought steel and iron latches with little egg-shaped brass knobs. Delectable ones are made by several specialists in Colonial iron work. Chiseled French door-fastenings are another story! Simple fastenings suitable for the provincial French house can be compromised, since many manufacturers make excellent English casement-window bolts and every sort of door-knob.

For my little Massachusetts house I used the most ordinary box-lock that is made, and had small good brass knobs fitted. They make all the difference. It is not possible to put a huge satin-finished greenish brass knob on a plate on a door and expect the room to suggest the dwelling of a person of cultivation—because it won't. The rhinoceros-toed shoe of a few years back was in no worse taste than green satin finish or oxidized bronze door-knobs and key-holes.

THE FIRELESS FIREPLACE

Another barrier of social prejudice—but one which is rapidly lifting—is the one against the fireless fireplace. Because flues—among many other things—are impossible to include in the small space of the average apartment, thousands of us are becoming gradually accustomed to the lack of the open fireplaces which we used to consider essential to all principal rooms.

There is such cheerlessness without a fire to animate an otherwise lifeless winter room, that actual need is driving most of us to accept what best we may. An ornamental mantel surrounding a mirror or a blank wall may serve indifferently as a wall trimming, but as a substitute for a fireplace it has about as welcoming an appeal as a shut barn-door.

And yet, since in the average apartment of highest class there is seldom more than one open fire, and in one of more reasonable price there is seldom even that, what is one to do? Does one prefer a blank wall in front of which to draw one's easy chair? Or does one use a substitute? And if so, which? Gas-logs were never much in favor. Those of the past were obviously artificial at best—and inclined to smell of gas. Electric fires are gradually improving, and the coal ones look quite nice—though in these days of steam heat no one burns hard coal in the grate! Nothing, however, as yet, takes the place of logs.

It is all a matter of personal feeling—a question which one must decide for oneself. A woman of notable taste has just put into the dining-room of her apartment a mantel and chimney-breast and fireplace complete—all but a chimney! At the moment it is arranged with logs with kindling and paper and even ashes carried from the real fireplace in another room. It can, of course, never be lighted, but it *does* complete the room. Especially since many more times are dining-room fires left unlighted, than lighted. A gas or electric fire would add the decorative effect of light, which

is becoming, certainly; but again it proclaims itself a substitute. The question to ask is, why should one mind?

The fact that the electric fire gives out no heat is a great advantage in a dining-room, where the backs of the persons sitting next to a genuine fire are usually cooked. But in a living-room the heat is missed. Perhaps they make electric ones with heat as well as merely with light. Perhaps they now make gas ones that are less obviously false than they used to be. At all events, if you have a fireless room, there are a number of manufactured substitutes which it would be well for you to consider—unless you can dissociate the connotation of home and hearth.

HANGING THE CURTAINS

As a last detail of preparation for furnishing, let us consider the structural preparation for the hanging of the curtains. If the windows are arched, there should be a space behind the arch across which to fit a straight rod. The curtains are hung on this as on any other rod, and the arch frames them in circular form. A round rod with curtains fitted on its sloping sides is difficult to fit and a makeshift when finished. If the arches were made before the house was bought, and you must fit them, the best way is to tack them to an arch-shaped frame of wood which then screws into the arched opening of the trim. But if you are building arched windows, don't forget to arrange for the hanging of the curtains before the walls are finished. (See Fig. 152, at end of Chapter XX.)

Windows that are deep-set have rather more distinction than those that are flush with the walls. Flat windows are very suitable in a simple house that is modern in intention, or in a frame Colonial one whose walls are typically thin. A very easy and attractive method of window treatment in a library, living-room or book-room, is to frame the entire window side of the wall-space with book-shelves. This will set the windows into an embrasure. But do not forget to

leave enough width beyond the trim to allow the curtains plenty of room to hang in.

The heavy curtains hang just back of the face of the bookcases, with lambrequins close to the bottom of the shelf, crossing the tops of the windows; or with a shelf-paper trimming of wood set over each window as a lambrequin.

BOOK-SHELVES

Book-shelves need not be as deep as most people make them. The best thing to do is to measure the books that you intend to put in them. It is of vital importance to waste no space in a room that is small. If the room is very big, an inch or two added to shelf-width does not matter. When bookcases are too deep and the books have a tendency to slide back out of line, making the shelves look like mouths full of crooked teeth, get some strips of wood—anything will do, though very small quarter-round is best—and tack them across the back of each shelf at the depth of the books that are on it.

Built-in bookcases in a pine room are naturally of pine. Built-in bookcases in a room with white or painted trim are equally proper in a wood finish that matches the furniture, or painted to match the trim. I think it depends perhaps upon the lightness of the wood. Pine bookcases are usually left waxed in a room with pine furniture. But in a room with mahogany furniture it is usually best to paint them to match the trim. The obvious place to build bookcases is on either side of the mantel, thus leveling the wall —unless the chimney-breast projects too far into the room. In that case it is wasting room to build the bookcase the same depth.

Twenty years and more ago, bookcases were built about five feet high all around a room, so that pictures could be hung over them, and ornaments and a regiment of photograph-frames stood on top of them. But now they start at the ceiling and come down to the floor, or to whichever

point is best for the framing of a piece of furniture. (See Plate 34.)

BUILT-IN ORNAMENTATION OF FURNITURE

Such bookcases or inset cupboards or corner cupboards, the bases and cornices of which are continued by the base-board or cornice or other moldings of the walls, should, of course, be completed before the movable furniture is placed. When this is not possible, and the furniture is all piled in the middle of the room and covered over with old sheets and curtains and paper—we all know what *that* is like, and make the best of it!

CANDLES, LAMPS, AND OTHER LIGHTS

If you are building, it is essential that you study the electric outlets carefully. Live in each room in imagination and be sure that every light and electric appliance has been arranged for. If you build the type of drawing-room that looks best with candle-light, then have candles by all means. But whether you are likely to use side-wall outlets or all the base-plugs you put in or not, do not omit plenty of electric wiring in a steel and concrete apartment building. It is much better to stop up the prepared outlets than to find out later, when your walls are finished and your room furnished, that you must either chisel the walls down or sit in darkness, or burn two or three dozen candles nightly that have to be replaced with fresh ones every morning. Nor is this the worst of it! If you are thinking of candles, the chances are that you have old appliqués or candelabra in which you intend to burn them. The chances are also that such constant changing of candles will at some time be done thoughtlessly, without supporting each branch from underneath as the candle is put in, with the result of a broken arm or an appliqué pulled off the wall. It is convenient, therefore, to use candles for occasions—or use occa-

sional candles; but for the essential lighting of your house, have plenty of outlets available, should you need them. (See Index.)

In the evening the drawing-room is quite properly lighted for becomingness to itself, but in the living-room there must be plenty of good lights, with shades that tip or that overhang the chair or sofa far enough to throw a bright light on book, or sewing, or writing-table.

An ordinary goose-necked lamp of green-painted iron with a reflector shade is unequaled for eye-comfort in reading small print or to do fine sewing by. If it is unsuitable or unbecoming to the room you like to use it in, it can easily be kept elsewhere and attached to a socket on a cord prepared for it. An excellent light for ordinary use is that of a "bridge" lamp, with an arm. That you can't get its glare below your line of vision is the only reason why the opaque shade of goose-neck or lowered drop-cord lamp is better. Nothing adds more to the charm of a room than lighting that is perfectly adjusted to need.

One of the fundamental faults (among many) of the modernistic interiors is found in their uncovered side-lights and their little squat lamps, which either stare you out of countenance or otherwise are about as comfortable to see by as tethered glowworms.

XV

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF INTERIOR FURNISHING

IN attempting to create a house of personality and charm, we must remember that while we have all the objects of the world to choose from, having once made our choice of color and prevailing form or style, the details which we then assemble must be in harmony with each other, with the climate where we live, with our manner of living, and with ourselves. We may—if we have the skill and knowledge—put utterly unrelated styles or forms together, if they but follow the laws of suitability to situation, to purpose, and to taste.

WHAT IS MEANT BY GOOD TASTE

It is easy enough for any of us to say: "Mrs. This has the most perfect taste, and Mrs. That the *worst!*" The important thing is to prove that this verdict is something more than untrained prejudice or haphazard preference.

Good taste might properly be defined as nice perception of the standards of suitability, form, proportion, scale and color, and the harmonious relation of each to the other. Knowledge of these standards must be acquired either consciously by means of study, or unconsciously by means of special opportunity.

For instance, if all your life you have lived in beautifully appointed houses and among people of discriminating taste, your instinct is naturally warned against the blatant, the vulgar and the sham. On the other hand, if you have happened to live your life in quite different surroundings, certain definite standards of taste must be learned through

study and application, exactly as you learn a foreign language. It is the harder way, but it may have even better results.

It is sometimes argued that taste is merely a standard established by the opinion of the majority, which is much the same as assuming that the manners of the majority are, *ipso facto,* correct! Consider the uncouth millions pouring yearly into this great melting-pot, our United States. Imagine the manners and tastes of the majority, and consider what the charm of living would be, should the majority be the criterion of culture.

IMPORTANCE OF YOUR PERSONAL CHOICE

It is quite true, however, that taste is to a great degree a matter of personal choice. It is this difference in choice that makes your house different from my house, and both of our houses different from those of our neighbors. And yet there are certain fundamental rules which your house and mine, and every other house of good taste, follows. In other words, no room that has any claim to beauty can be out of scale, ill balanced, or vulgar in color or ornament. Neither can a room have charm without an inviting arrangement of furniture. The one seeming contradiction is that there must be unity, or the room is mongrel; and at the same time there must be diversity, or there can be no interest. A paradox, to say the least, but one to which we shall later have the key.

Except color, which has already been described, let us take each of the requirements of beauty and good taste in detail, beginning with scale.

SCALE

If you have an innate sense of scale you instinctively recoil from gigantic ornament on a miniature object, or the reverse. You may not measure the human figure to discover

that its classic proportion is seven heads high, but you think a person runty who is between four and five heads high. On the other hand, a figure that is eight heads high is pleasing, since it is the idealized classic measurement. But carried to an exaggerated extreme, too long a body becomes equally unpleasant—in fact, headless.

Precisely, therefore, as you find unpleasing the human figure that is out of scale, you find unpleasing—though you may not reason why—a room that is out of scale; because a person or an object that is out of scale is neither more nor less than a deformity. And yet, although to choke a tiny room with too big furniture gives an effect of strangling, furniture that is small in scale gives to an average room an effect of ease, and breathing space. On the other hand, a very large, high-ceilinged room should not look as though filled with doll's furniture.

Apart from size in relation to its surroundings, an object of furniture may be a deformity because it is weak-legged, or because its top is too heavy, or because it is otherwise out of scale. Or it may appear ugly because its ornamentation is out of scale.

BALANCE

Everyone knows that two objects of equal weight, at equal distances from whatever may be the center, balance each other. A room is perfectly balanced when it appears to be completely at rest. Of course, some people do not mind —or even notice—whether a room is at rest or not. Some people do not notice that a ship is pitching, either. But one who is sensitive to balance (whether esthetically or as a sailor) is made keenly uncomfortable in either case.

If your sense of balance is at all acute, your impulse is to steady a room that has too much weight in one spot, exactly as your impulse is to steady a canoe that is unevenly loaded.

The furniture in a room is balanced, for instance, when

Mrs. Reginald Peirce, Decorator

THE MODERN SETTING OF A SOFA THAT HAS PRACTICAL COMFORT AND INVITING APPEAL

[PLATE 28]

Julius Gregory, Architect

A ROOM OF PERSONALITY AND COMFORT, EQUALLY APPEALING TO A WOMAN, TO A MAN, OR TO CHILDREN

[PLATE 29]

Fig. 109
OBVIOUS BALANCE

a very tall secretary is safely centered on the wall opposite two windows, at a point between them, making the lower point of a V. (Fig. 109.) Or, when there is only one window, and that not in the center of the wall, placing the secretary at the same distance diagonally off center—on the wall opposite—will restore its balance. Sometimes a pediment added to a door on a wall opposite heavy furniture will give the room balance; this identical pediment, however, added to a door on the same side as the furniture weight, would produce shipwreck.

Bisymmetric balance, of course, means identical objects placed at precisely the same distance on either side of the center of a wall. Two windows exactly the same distance from the center, or duplicate chairs standing on either side of a table, or any two objects evenly placed, are bisymmetrical.

OCCULT BALANCE

Occult balance is much more difficult to explain, because it is a balance that you feel rather than one that you can measure. It is an adjustment that satisfies your own sensibility, and is often very subtle. Nearly every house of charm is an illustration of occult balance—an instinctively adjusted proportion, or picture sense. If you lack this sense, you can still achieve occult balance; you need merely arrange each wall as though it stood upon a see-saw and you wanted to keep it level. Better still, perhaps, is to imagine the entire floor balanced on a center pin, and to furnish it so that one side or corner of the room will not go down and its opposite one go up.

Sometimes, especially in an apartment building where, in order to have a large room, it may be necessary to push walls out of line, symmetrical balance is out of the question.

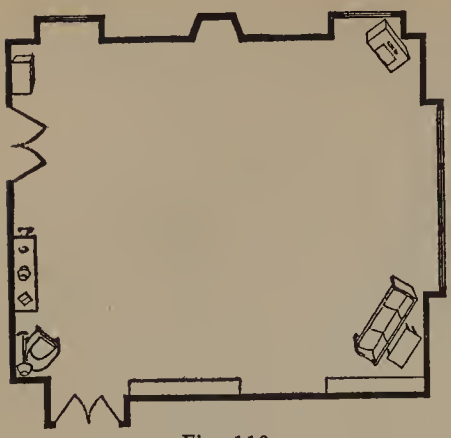


Fig. 110
EXAMPLE OF OCCULT BALANCE

And yet a perfectly restful room can result. Figure 110 illustrates lack of architectural balance in the drawing-room of my own apartment corrected by occult balance. The vestibule at the lower left is the entrance. It is included as part of a series of arches that frame two bookcases and another recess, and that extend the length of the wall. The double door off center on the left wall is balanced by a broad secretary bookcase. The difference in width of the walls, on either side of the three windows at the right, is balanced by a dark mahogany drop-front desk on the narrow wall and a small sofa covered in light-colored material on the other. On the upper wall the chimney projects as shown in Plate 26, and is set between bisymmetric windows that match the bookcases. (See Plate 16.) (Since writing the above, I have put a big chair in place of the light sofa, but the balance is maintained.)

The other furniture in the room is not indicated because the diagram merely illustrates wall-balance. But two items might be noted, though they have nothing whatever to do with balance: The vestibule was a trick by which an effect of size was added to the room and taken away from the over-length of the gallery leading to it. The other item is that the dining-room doors open into the living-room, instead of into the dining-room, as is customary. Whether you like this plan or not depends upon whether you habitually keep these doors open or shut. But if your habit is to keep them shut except when you are eating, and then leave them open, the plan is very practical, since neither room is ever encumbered with jutting doors. If you leave them open, the usual way is better. If you never have them stand open, it does not matter.

PLACING THE PIANO

A difficult object to place in a room—without capsizing it—is a grand piano, since it can rarely if ever be put in the middle of the floor! The usual way to balance it is to hang very high and rather dark curtains on the opposite side of the room; or else a unified group of furniture. For instance, a whole wall-covering of tapestry, with a sofa under it, is not too much counterweight for a concert-grand piano. A commode or long table, with a picture or mirror hung low enough to be included with it as a single unit of furnishing, will balance a baby-grand. A piano is, of course, made still heavier if it has an unusually large cover over it weighted down by ornaments or a ponderous lamp.

Usually the best way to place an upright piano is to stand it against one wall and put a bookcase—or secretary bookcase—on the opposite side to balance it. In rooms that are long in shape or that have wide doorless door frames, an upright piano is sometimes used successfully as a screen —keys to the room or back to the room—with a sofa or a table against it. But flat against the wall is safest. The worst possible way to put it is across a corner.

The extreme height in the average room is furnished by the windows, and it is balanced either by the weight of furniture or by the overmantel, or by other wall-hangings. The weight of a sofa is easily balanced by a mantel on the opposite wall, but a sofa—or possibly two sofas—next to the mantel and therefore an addition to its weight, must have an important counterbalance.

In Figure 114, page 345, for example, the mantel, two cabinets, and two small sofas are counterbalanced by the large sofa, two large tables with important lamps and ornaments, and a large picture, decorative panel, or tapestry hung over the sofa. If it be a picture, it must be hung low enough to come well below the top of the table lamp-shades, in order to produce the effect of a single heavy unit instead

of one low, widespread unit and a separate picture unit far above. The mirrors over the two consoles on the left wall are very high and balance the windows. They are not nearly as high as the windows, but they are in occult balance because you feel that they weigh more. In fact, if they hang from the picture molding, the curtains should be moderately dark. But if they rest on the consoles and are therefore weightless, the curtains may very well be light. If there be a mirror over the mantel, the picture or panel over the big sofa might better be fairly dark, especially if the two cabinets against the opposite wall are of mahogany. Should they be gilt or light, the over-sofa decoration might quite well be light, depending upon the general coloring of the room.

The furniture arrangement in Figure 112, page 322, has a tendency to dip down at the upper right-hand corner, where the big sofa, the three windows and the piano are more than dangerously close together. Balance is, however, restored by a large dark picture over the mantel and a hanging of dark brocade over the heavy refectory table centered on the left wall. In effect this hanging should appear more solid than the window curtain material, which is perhaps of taffeta.

LINE AND FORM

Line means merely the edge of anything. Form is the complete shape of a finished article. The lines of a book are straight, and at right angles to one another. The form of a book is a flat rectangular block. A single object is often composed of innumerable lines that are parallel and right-angled—such as doors and all straight-lined furniture. Other objects are composed of innumerable, beautifully related, or antagonistically unrelated curves.

Curved lines, unless they have purpose in the general design, are apt to be disturbing as well as futile. Your eye, for instance, follows the contour of a Chinese vase; it starts at a given point and follows a pleasing outline to completion at

the point it started from; or it follows the flowing lines of the Italian Renaissance arabesque. But applied ornament that has no relationship with that which it ornaments, and therefore starts with a jerk and stops with a bump, is disturbing. Like the ill-considered wriggles typical of cheapest ornate furniture, wriggles that start nowhere, and go nowhere, and belong nowhere, because serving no definite purpose, are usually bad.

Apart from the lines which perhaps beautify a single object, one must consider these same lines in relation to the room. A room is usually longer than wide and less high than wide; its ceiling and walls are flat. Of course, the ceiling may be vaulted, barrel-rounded, coved, or open-beamed with a pitch roof. Sometimes a room is octagonal; sometimes it is round, or oval. But, taking as typical the room that is a flat-ceilinged rectangle, its lines are all horizontal or vertical. Its windows are rectangular, and so are its doors and its fireplace opening. If we panel the walls, we add more straight lines. A carpet on the floor is another rectangle. Then we put the furniture—more rectangles—against the wall. A few chairs or occasional tables stand obliquely, but the effect of the room is one of parallel and perpendicular lines, which is the most dignified, restful, conservatively correct—and therefore the safest—method of furnishing possible.

But let us suppose that you like the embellishing grace of the curve; and let us say, then, that you join the wall and ceiling with a coved cornice, and that you panel the room with Louis XV curved-topped paneling; that you put in a few straight pieces of furniture to match the structure of the room, and some curved pieces to match the curved paneling. In this way the lines of the room are brought into harmony.

Or you could—more simply—have put a figured paper on the walls, that would have added all the lines of which the design was composed. From these you would instinctively interpret the general character of the design in the detail of the furnishing.

AVOID MIXING PRONOUNCED PATTERNS

There is one rule of interior decoration that most of us follow blindly—that of avoiding mixed patterns. In other words, if you put a figured paper on your walls, you should not put up figured curtains! You are supposed to stick to plain hangings and furniture-covering or use striped material; unless, of course, paper and chintz are made to match —which is very pretty if the room be small and sparsely furnished, and the pattern not too large or striking. As there are exceptions to most rules, a room can be much prettier and have greater personality than any matched one, if it be done in two or even more figured materials; but they must supplement each other.

The triads noted in Chapter X are used by all manufacturers. It is easy, therefore, to find variety in the same color scheme. Moreover, patterns that are in accord are not as hard to find as might be supposed.

For example, the present popularity of robin's-egg blue and terra-cotta pink with foliage of a very dark blue-green, means that the market is filled with papers and chintzes in these colors. A chintz therefore that has trees in deep blue-green and distant scenes in flesh terra-cotta on a robin's-egg background goes beautifully with a wall of pale flesh-colored paper with scenes and figures accented with blue-green. It is the opinion of certain authorities that one may use two figured materials that are different in scale. It can be done, but it is a dangerous rule for the novice, unless the little material is practically a diaper or small all-over pattern that has the value of a plain material.

A bisymmetric conventionalized floral design on a wall, and natural outlines of realistic flowers in the chintz, are, of course, out of harmony.

Straight lines, curved lines, and oblique lines, each unrelated to the other, are disturbing. For instance, catacornered rugs have always been considered bad—likewise picture wires that hang from a single hook in the shape of an A

—because they are out of harmony with the vertical lines of the room. But in Modern rooms where triangles flourish and zigzags reign supreme, pointed picture-wires and cross-cornered furniture and small rugs laid herringbone will be perfectly in accord.

HANGING PICTURES

To repeat: the typical wire that runs from the upper corners of a picture to the single hook on the molding, like an A, is the pet tabu of all decorators.

The way all the best decorators hang pictures is to run a wire through two picture-hooks screwed into the back of the frame on either side near the top, and then to have each separate end of the wire hang vertically from a hook in the molding. The picture naturally adjusts itself to the wire—nothing could be simpler. Moreover, the wires are parallel with the perpendicular lines of the room. The ends of the wire loop around the picture hooks and the picture or mirror is merely pulled straight on the wire, which slides through the screw eyes.

If there must be wires, then this is the proper way to adjust them. But why wires? True, the first principle of architecture exacts that every object be supported, and a picture put on a wall without any visible means of support is structurally wrong. It must be. But, on the other hand, we all know that there is a wire behind the picture and a good strong picture-nail on which the wire is hung. Perhaps this is occult picture hanging? Why not?

Expert selection and application of ornament is a test of good taste. The best rule for the decoration of a wall or a piece of furniture is the same as the rule which every well-dressed woman applies to the trimming of her clothes. Add so much as is necessary to complete the definite intention of the design, and then *stop*. The room in worst taste is invariably one that is overtrimmed, since vulgarity and overtrimming are one and the same.

A MUSEUM OF SENTIMENT

Another unpleasing room—not vulgar, but frumpy—is one that is turned into a museum of sentiment. In such a room the owner will eliminate nothing that any member of her family ever fancied. All the table-tops and twice as many cabinets as the room should hold are packed solidly with treasures that range from Sèvres, Royal Worcester and cameo vases to dozens of picture-frames, baby's rattles and small china dogs and kittens associated with the users of the rattles. Or perhaps mistaken ideas of house beautification induce the preservation of Rogers groups, embroidered plush hassocks, or conch shells. Perhaps the owner of one such room believes that a miniature Alpine hat with a feather labeled "Gruss aus Innsbruck!" is an embellishing ornament.

The Japanese practise of keeping most of their ornaments put away, and bringing them out one by one, is a little severe for our ideas of cozy comfort; but the suggestion is one that most of us would do well to take to heart, and in going through our rooms we might at least ask ourselves if we must really have nineteen different photographs of the baby. Would not two, or at most three, be enough? Why do we continue putting the same ornaments year after year—with slight accumulations—on certain tables or on the mantel-shelf? Would the table or the mantel not perhaps look much better if the objects of genuine beauty were left and the objects of sentiment relegated to a little museum-mausoleum elsewhere?

Of course, there are rooms and rooms! Living-rooms, libraries or studies that have individuality and charm to the highest degree are rather especially those which have every inch of wall space hung with personal mementos, such as sketches, framed letters, documents, photographs; each an evidence that the owner is one whose contacts with life have been both interesting and personal. In other words, suitability should be considered in one's selection for a mu-

seum of sentiment that is installed in one of the principal rooms.

MIXTURES VS. MATCHINGS

A mixture of furniture, if it be assembled with taste and skill, is far more likely to produce a room of personality than is one which is precisely matched. It is obvious—if you think about it—that nothing is quite so personality-destroying as an entire room filled with furniture, each piece of which is precisely the same as every other. Boredom is the inevitable result—unless this handicap be overcome by very unusual counteracting interest. But the handicap is heavy, even so. In fact, the mid-Victorian-General-Grant period of bad taste might be characterized by city streets of identical brownstone-front houses and "suites" of furniture. The brownstone fronts are rapidly demolishing, but in the furniture trade, suites still flourish, and—except in little cottage bedrooms, and in occasional dining-rooms that have painted furniture—personality suffers accordingly.

Rooms that have painted furniture should be considered differently, because, no matter what the style of the individual pieces may have been, the painting usually makes them match. And yet they would in many cases have more charm if they were somewhat different—at least in the effect of decoration. What could be more uninteresting than a collection of painted furniture, each piece garnished with the same decalcomania on the identical spot? A spotty wallpaper that induces your eye to run up and down on the diagonal stepping-stones of the pattern is not half as disturbing as jumping from object to object to find the inevitable rose-bud or Chinese pagoda! The annoyance of this repetition is easily avoided by changing somewhat the design and its location, and by omitting it on some of the pieces, or by adding one or two objects painted in a contrasting color.

THE PARADOXICAL REQUIREMENTS, UNITY AND DIVERSITY

The demands of unity and diversity are quite easily fulfilled, since unity means harmony and diversity imagination. For example, let us paint a dining-table a yellowish gray-green, and paint the sideboard the same green with panels outlined in rubbed-off gold. Then we will decorate the chair-backs elaborately with painted fruits in neutral color and gold. Or, if we like much color, let us paint the chairs Chinese red and decorate them in silhouettes of green and gold.

A matched dining-room of no pretensions whatever may have plenty of interest in its table-setting and its color. But a room of importance with so-called Period furniture, and with the details of all the pieces alike, is not merely monotonous but palpably false, because Period furniture was never made in complete sets—*except* dining-room chairs and occasional sofas with two or four matching side-chairs. Otherwise the only pieces made alike were pairs.

Beautiful furniture may have been alike in general effect, but it was created piece by piece or pair by pair. Even in a dining-room, the room in which the furniture is more properly alike than in any other, there were perhaps a dozen chairs made, let us say, by Chippendale. The sideboard—possibly a pair of them—had perhaps been made by Sheraton. A side-table might be Chippendale's—but *not* a repetition of the chair-back design. That furniture by notable men, or belonging to a definite Period, is sometimes seemingly a set, because of a preference for certain forms or ornaments which they constantly made use of, is true, of course; but, even so, they never resorted to mechanical duplication.

Whole rooms full of furniture turned out in quantity, and all to match, are quite suitable in hotels, since personality is impossible there anyway. Rooms that are occupied by three hundred and sixty-five persons in a year can scarcely express three hundred and sixty-five different per-

sons. The chief objection to matching sets is that such sets destroy personality. What possible personality can be expressed in Pattern No. 987,654,321 in sixteen pieces? The same details sixteen times repeated! After all, would you choose sixteen identical hats?

THE NECESSITY FOR VARIABILITY

The variability of our own personal choice in assembling our homes is the true expression of our personal taste and is the factor of interest. No one could ever be interested in unvarying repetition—except as a cure for insomnia.

Moreover, just as it is advisable to avoid the pattern No. 987,654,321 effect, it is often better that Periods be not too strictly adhered to, either. It does not make the least difference—except in a museum, or in rooms of museum character—whether a piece of lacquer is old English, Chinese, or made-yesterday reproduction; or whether a chair is English, German, Dutch, Swedish, Spanish, or American. The only matching-law that matters is that you cannot put perfect quality directly next to no quality at all, without making the latter unendurable. The new-cut crudeness of raw surface screams in pain if put next to the subtle softness of age-old patina. Were it not for this one inimitable quality of texture and surface that age alone can produce, there would be no point in buying old furniture. In fact, when it is made of well seasoned, carefully chosen wood, and is conscientiously designed; and when its surface is finished as it ought to be, modern furniture can be—and sometimes is—as beautiful as any antique that ever was.

SLAVERY TO THE WORD "ANTIQUE"

Why good modern finish is so often less than beautiful is hard to understand, especially in this day of unlimited flexibility of machinery, when we should be able to reproduce, at least passably, that tedious-to-make but undeniably

supreme finish known as French polish. Why certain commercial varieties of finish are often worse than bad is another side of the story, which will be dealt with in a later chapter. (See Index.) Nevertheless, there is little sense in what might be called slavery to the word "antique."

The fact that a piece of furniture or an object of ornament or utility happens merely to be old is not the slightest reason for buying it, unless, apart from its antiquity, one thinks it beautiful, and unless one has—or is likely to have —a suitable use for it.

At the sound of the words, "We guarantee it to be genuine," countless otherwise sensible people are hypnotized into buying every sort of useless junk. Shorn of the glamorous tag, "Antique," could anything be more unsuitable to a drawing-room than a potter's implements, kitchen crocks, washstands and warming pans?

Of course, if one have a New-England-kitchen type of room, or if one be making a collection of Americana, that is one thing; but assembling a modern house of suitability is perhaps another. As for limiting the comfort of one's home for the sake of slavish adherence to the past—nothing could be more idiotic!

Even if one does happen to live in a house a hundred years old, that is little reason for going without deep-springed beds or chairs or sofas. One who is such a purist as to refuse to have modern furniture in an early Colonial house, should be consistent and not have plumbing, or a modern range, or an electric icebox, or electric lights, or a furnace, or a radio, or a telephone, or any other comforts of modern life.

ADJUSTMENTS IN FURNISHING A VERY OLD HOUSE

The main object in furnishing an old house is to keep the quaintness and the spirit of its character as much as you can without sacrificing a single item of comfort or luxury that you like and can afford.

What is meant by keeping the spirit of a room or a

house is simply adhering as closely as possible to an impression of suitability. Modern improvements are admissible because their absence would not merely mean discomfort to yourself, but would make your manner of living a nuisance to all your friends. It is within the picture, however, to choose your modern equipment in suitable form. Beds can be old-fashioned in appearance; the covers laid over them in the daytime can be buckram-lined and boxed to look as quaintly stiff and hard as you please. But when the blankets are turned down for the night, let the mattresses and springs be such that you or your family or your guests can find rest on them unmarred by corn-husk lumps and plank hardness.

CAMOUFLAGING RADIATORS, RADIOS, PHONOGRAPHS AND TELEPHONES

A room that is to have an old atmosphere need have no evidence of radiators (nor of their window-box cages), because steam-pipes are easily stowed away in the prepared bottom of a corner cupboard, or put into an Italian, English or Spanish chest. Or they can be set into a section of a bookcase; book-back trimming can be fastened on a door, with narrow slits above each book-row, and the whole door can be opened when necessary. In a bedroom the pipes can be hidden beautifully under the petticoat of a dressing-table. If your living-room is finished in Jacobean oak or other dark-colored wood, it will not be hard to find a radio and phonograph that will fit in suitably as they are; sometimes they look better when they are cut down in height. In certain rooms where they are too much out of key, they can be fitted into any type of commode-chest or highboy. The drawer-fronts are made into a door, and, if necessary, the top lifts up.

But, whatever we do with our new inventions—our radios and radiators—let us not petticoat our telephones! Telephones hidden under doll's hoop-skirts or other frip-

peries are more typical of the movies than of a house in good taste. An ordinary black telephone is an inoffensively plain object of utility; it can usually be stood on a desk or on the lower shelf of a table, where it is out of the way yet easily reached. Or the new one-piece instrument can be painted to go with the room, and look very well almost anywhere.*

LIGHT OUTLETS AND FURNITURE SPACES

Before you build, remodel or buy, it is essential that all furniture of importance be carefully considered and marked on the floor-plan. Even in a very large house, with plenty of wall-space, it is necessary to have an idea where the furniture is to go in order to get an impression of the finished room, and to know where the light outlets and bells are to go. In very little rooms, it is essential to fit the furniture exactly, since the moving of a wall or door an inch or two makes the difference between a room that is completely comfortable and one that is completely the reverse.

The best way to study the practicability of each room is to live in it—on paper. And the only way to do this is to measure the exact size of the furniture that you have—or, if you haven't bought it, measure that in the rooms you are living in—and decide whether you want this or that piece larger or smaller.

Nearly all plans are drawn to a scale of a quarter of an inch to the foot (the scale is printed on each); so you merely measure the outside width of a sofa by its outside length and cut a little piece of paper in exact reduction of its size. A sofa 2½ feet wide by 6 feet long would be represented by a rectangular fragment of paper ⅝ of an inch wide by 1½ inches long. The average single bed 3 feet wide by 7 feet long is represented on the plan by a piece of paper ¾ of an inch wide by 1¾ inches long. Many people try to furnish a room by guessing at the size of the

* It is against the Telephone Company's rules to paint your own telephone, but the company will paint it for you to match any sample you send for $17, plus $3 exchange charge.

room and of the furniture as well, a procedure that is so inaccurate (except for a professional draftsman) as to be useless. Most people draw outlines on the plans. But if you cut paper patterns of the accurate size of the necessary pieces of furniture, it is easy to move them about on the accurate plan of each room until you see which way they fit best. The arrangement is clearer if you cut your furniture patterns in paper that is of a different color from that of the plan.

Many rooms can be furnished automatically, but others are difficult, and often some of the larger objects are impossible to fit in without adjustment of the wall space. Small rooms with uneven or insufficient wall length for an essential piece of furniture, must perhaps be replanned. The smaller the room, the more necessary it is that the furniture and room measurements be minutely accurate, since the whole point is in being able to make difficult adjustments to best advantage.

When the furniture is placed, then mark your electric-light openings. Nothing is more important than convenient and becoming light. This matter is worth a lot of pains, especially as nothing is more easily done wrong. In fact, about 25 per cent. of light fixtures must later be moved, or one must endure wires lying all over the floor.

A FEW LIGHTING REMINDERS

Decide where all pictures or tapestry or other wall ornaments are to go. Measure them and mark them, and then see where you want your side-lights.

The builder's delight is to panel a room and then center a side-fixture in each panel. Nowhere to hang a thing! When a room is paneled it is fairly safe to put side-lights between them, or possibly in narrow ones. It is taken for granted that side-lights go over the mantel. Yes, but *where?* The answer depends entirely upon what else is going over the mantel. Measure this out on paper.

Side-lights in the wrong place can interfere with form and balance quite as much as a stepladder or a child's wagon, or any other left-out-of-place object. Base-plugs are not a difficult problem if you put in plenty of them—especially on both sides of every door. The one snag is to find a plug on the right of a door for a chair that must stand on the left. This sounds too foolish to write; yet we have all of us at some time had to cut into walls or floors or endure electric wires running around a door-frame.

For the service end, be sure to remember outlets for whichever electric appliances you are likely to instal. You are not likely to forget one for the icebox, but you might forget to put a plug in every room for the vacuum-cleaner, so that you can use it without pulling out a lamp plug; or you might forget the plug for the iron in the sewing-room, or that for some other essential object which you are sure to need.

And do not forget a double plug at the head of every bed. One is for a night light and one for emergency requirement—for a heating pad, say, or a milk-heater, or anything of which the occupant, well or ill, might have need.

Bells are noted for a persistent tendency to be in the wrong place. You might think of this—though it won't do much good, because, no matter where you habitually sit, the bell will be elsewhere.

ROOMS THAT ARE BAD-MANNERED

In placing the furniture in whichever room you receive your friends, it is well to remember that an essential of charm is hospitality. A room that expresses rudeness has no more appeal than a rude person. Moreover, a room can be every bit as rude as a person. A grouping that is notoriously bad-mannered is a fireplace blockade, such as the one shown in Figure 111.

In this most ill-bred arrangement, a huge upholstered sofa is jammed up in front of the fireplace, with a colossal

library table back of it, two blockading armchairs flanking the sofa, and a cow-path left to walk around.

If you imagine yourself a guest who has just entered the door, you will see that you are blocked on all sides. You can sit in the corner on your right by yourself, but you are barricaded by the long table, sofa, and chair-backs from

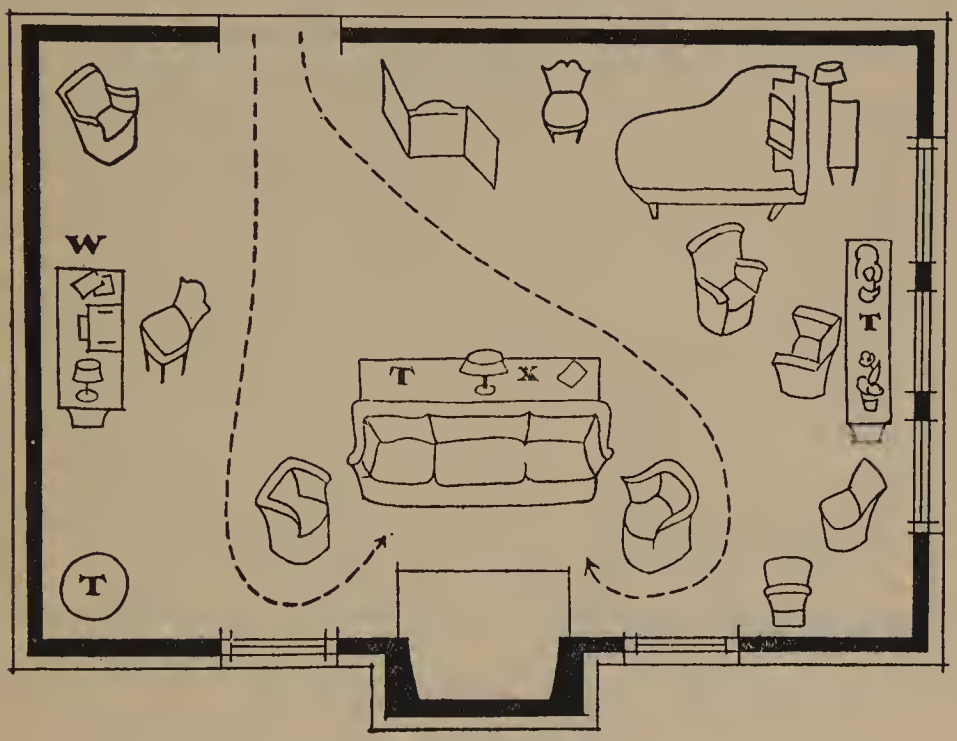


Fig. 111

THE INHOSPITABLE WAY

W—Writing Desk. T—Table. X—Lamp.

the principal and only comfortable grouping around the fireplace. You are also barred by the screen and piano from discovering any welcome at the left.

Even if the room be large enough to leave plenty of space around it, a central cluttering of furniture, barricading the hearth—the symbol of hospitality—results obviously in back-turned rudeness. Just why persons very new to luxury invariably select this awkward arrangement, in which the occupants of the sofa and of the two flanking

chairs are literally cooked, while the others are segregated in the cold and loneliness of the outlying districts, has never been explained! Of course, if such furniture-placing be in the frozen North, in an unheated shack, or in any cold-weather camp, the greater the barricade the better—for the elect. Moreover, any newcomers beyond the capacity of

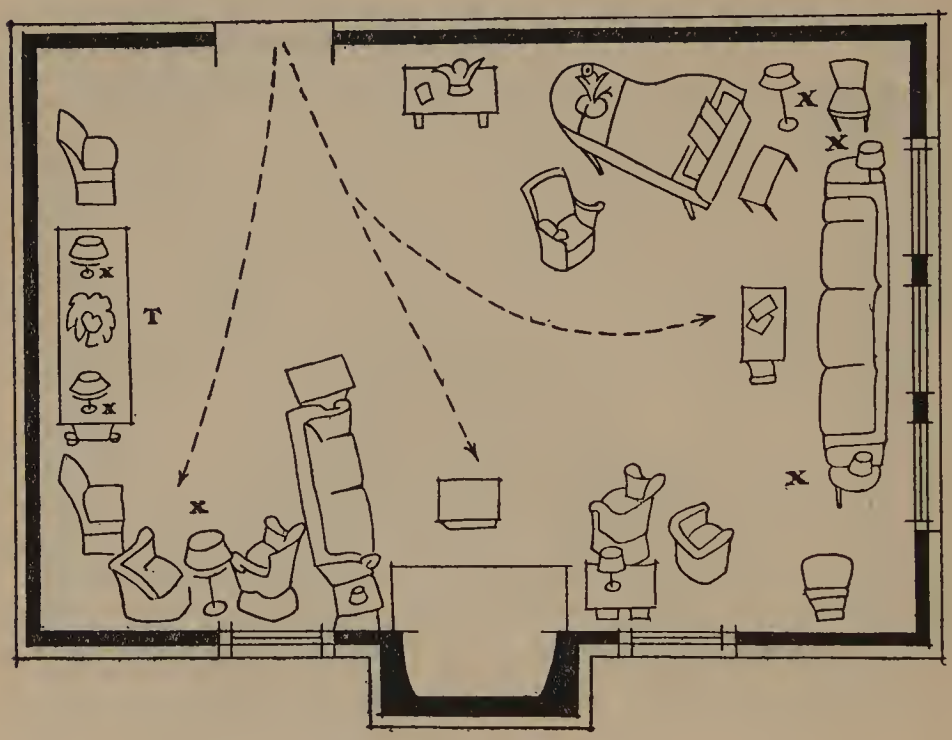


Fig. 112
THE HOSPITABLE WAY
T—Table. X—Lamp.

the hearthside seats can sit on the floor in front of the fire. But in a modern luxurious house, such furnishing is awkward, inhospitable, and charm-destroying—unless the room is occupied by a man alone and no more than three other persons are under any circumstances admitted.

The same room, with furniture differently placed, is shown in Figure 112. Here two or three or any number of people are equally welcomed by facing chairs and ample floor space for easy circulation. (In both drawings the piano

by accident was turned curved side to wall. Actually it should be turned around or placed elsewhere.

Rooms that are skilfully and invitingly arranged have ease, poise and welcoming grace of manner. Others that are inexpertly assembled are often as ill-mannered as the unknowing provincial hostess who has the dishes at table presented to herself first, and her broken-into leavings passed on to her guests.

XVI

EACH ROOM IN DETAIL

THE intention of this chapter is to begin at the front door of a composite American house and go through it, room by room, in order to define its character and purpose, and perhaps thereby discover just why the come-hither of certain rooms is irresistible, and why the get-thee-hence of others is equally pronounced.

First of all, therefore, let us consider the character and the purpose of the entrance hall.

THE ENTRANCE HALL

Since this is primarily a passageway, and its object is to lead you to the rooms of the house, it should not be cluttered with furniture; neither should it invite you to sit down and stay indefinitely. In short, an open fire with a low easy-chair drawn up before it should not be put in a hall—unless it is also a living-room (in which case it will be considered as such elsewhere). A fireplace is suitable, of course, always and everywhere; there should be merely no encouragement to sit beside it.

An important item of beauty in a hall is appealing color. This may be in the painting or papering of the walls, or, greatest beautification of all, in a lovely stairway. Wallpaper gives an especially friendly—and therefore welcoming and homelike—effect. Walls of pine or other wood, suitably painted, also make a homelike hall. Marble halls can be completely beautiful, but they are apt to be cold and are sometimes overpretentious. The white-paneled wall and black-and-white-marble floor, which are still epidemic

among the decorators, are always good style for a small hall or the foyer of an apartment.

On general principles a hall should be light—unless it is oak-paneled in an English house. But, whatever you do, avoid highly varnished wood-trim, embossed or oatmeal papers, and rough plaster protuberances, if you would have a house of charm.

FLOORS AND STAIR-TREADS

Loveliness of stairway that is suitable in type and size for the house is of first importance. A stair of intrinsic worth is of second importance.

To the stair details already noted in Chapter IX we might add that carpeted marble or tile stairs are apt to look overgrand-hotelish. A carpet—or even rugs—on a stair such as the one in Plate 23 would destroy its charm. Wood stairs, on the other hand, are usually carpeted; but if you like walking up and down on bare treads, a runner is unnecessary. (If you also like high wax polish, it might be no more than prudent to take out an accident insurance policy covering every one who comes into the house.)

Bare hall floors are often preferred when the flooring is not of wood. Those that are plain or that have an all-over pattern are covered much or little, or not at all—as one prefers. But a marble floor that has a design of formal importance should be neither extinguished by a big rug nor patched with little ones. Wood floors, whether plain, painted, or inlaid, should be at least partially covered with carpet or rugs. Personally, I like wood stairs carpeted, but all marble and most other hall floors that are not of wood, bare. (See Plates 16 and 23.)

HALL FURNITURE

For a hall of small size, a chest or bench, or a chair or two, on which men visitors can lay coats and hats; a table with a writing-pad and pencil, so that a friend may leave a note; a mirror for women visitors to glance in, as

well as for embellishment, are all the furnishing necessary. A hall too small for even this amount of furniture would better have a chair or bench than a table, since something to lay a coat or wrap on is the first essential.

If the hall be formal, the items of furniture would be better in pairs. But a large hall of irregular type, especially one in a country house, is quite as suitably furnished with unmatching pieces—a bench against one wall-space, a chest against another, an odd number of chairs, and a small writing-table or a secretary, perhaps.

But no matter how small or how big the hall, its effect upon the eye should be one of emptiness rather than of being too fully furnished; and the more formal its type, the more empty it should be. (See Plate 30.)

What little furniture there is should be effectively placed, and good of its kind. The first is easy to achieve, since to put a small object all alone by itself against a bare wall cannot fail of effectiveness. The second is not difficult, either, since the simplest and fewest objects are all that are necessary—one chair, one small table, one little mirror, one little print.

HALL LIGHTING

Side-lights are suitable in every hall, unless there is a scenic paper. In this case, the side-fixtures should be set on pilasters, or else the lamps should be put on tables or floor-lamps should be used.

Sometimes specially-made light-fixtures can be adjusted to the design of a scenic paper, but it is very difficult. On a certain paper that shows a street opening into a square, a side-fixture made like a lantern hangs on the front of a building in the foreground. And in the office of a well-known decorator lights are applied to the buildings on the banks of the Seine. At all events, as small lights must be made part of the picture and their size adjusted accordingly, it is easier for most of us to use floor-lamps. (See Plate 16.)

In all types of cottages or in halls that are at all broad,

lamps on tables—if you prefer them—are quite as suitable as side-lights, and are more homelike.

Few details lend themselves to greater vulgarity than lighting fixtures—and, in fact, all hardware and metal-work. Shading—the manufacturers call it "high-lighting"—is in equally bad taste, whether on wood surface or on metal. The rubbing off and painting on which is commercially labeled an "Art finish" is also to be shunned—unless judgment be reliable enough to choose accurately between glazing that can be good and smudging that is an abomination. Silver that is oxidized is nothing more nor less than dirty finger-nailed. Satin-faced silver is perhaps practical, and therefore admissible for those who lack silver-cleaning facilities; but in a well-appointed house it is not in best taste.* And avoid as you would the plague the satin-finished brass known as "brushed." But tole (a French variety of enameled and decorated tin) is nearly always good. Colonial fixtures of plain polished brass, wrought iron, gilt, crystal, and even tin, are almost invariably good. If you avoid brushed brass, art-shaded bronze, and all oxidized metal in door-knobs as well as light fixtures, lamps and all other equipment, you cannot go far wrong, since metal objects in bad taste are almost invariably confined to these tabu materials.

Neither hall-globe nor door-knob-shaped ceiling lights are in good taste, because they are almost certain to be of tabu material and bad in outline. If there must be a fixture in a ceiling that is too low for a lantern, then it would best be set flat in the shape of a star or in one of the modernistic geometrical designs.

The hall is a very suitable place to put decorated doors—if you happen to like them. Those with small panes of glass (builders call them French doors) were—and to a great extent are still—very popular in small houses and apartments. One reason for their popularity is that they light dark halls and apartment foyers. Another reason is that many

* Brides—or others—who may have had satin-faced silver given to them, can have it changed to a polished surface in a moment's time by any silversmith.

people find them more cheerful and informal than the totally barricading wooden doors. If you have them and do not like the typical silk curtains stretched behind them—which do more or less suggest a dressmaking establishment—they can be decorated in any number of ways. Prints or other decorations are easily set behind (or in front of) each pane, or a modern effect can be achieved by fitting silver tea-paper into each frame. The frame is then silvered or lacquered.

A FEW HALL DETAILS

Since the umbrella-stand is rarely an object of beauty, the simpler and less obtrusive it is, the better. One of the painted metal, tole, in the shape of a topless octagon cage, looks best, perhaps—unless the typical Chinese umbrella-jar is a good one, or some sort of Italian jar is more suitable.

The vestibule—if there be one—is the proper place for the umbrella-stand, with a mirror over it, so that one coming in from the rain can leave the umbrella and look in the glass to make what facial reparations may be necessary.

Hall-racks should be avoided—unless you have a plain, old-fashioned, "homey" house, in which case an old one might best remain. (See Chapter XIX.)

In every house where many guests are invited for week-ends there should be two closets in the hall; one for the coats, racquets, and golf-bags of the visitors, and the other for the use of the family alone. This is necessary to the comfort of the family quite as much as of the visitors.

A telephone closet is also a great convenience in a house that is apt to be filled with people who are likely to be called to the telephone.

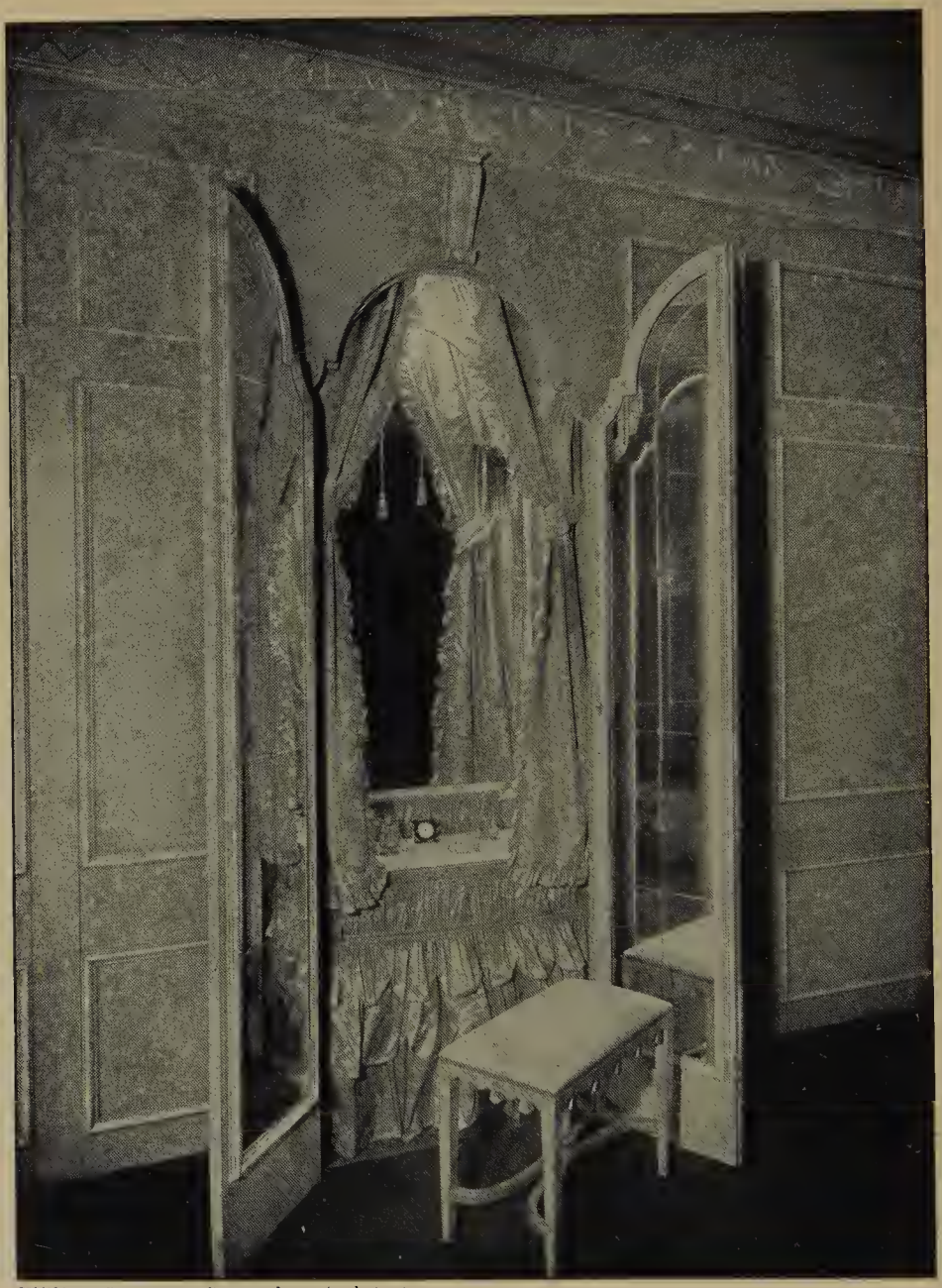
BOOKS—SOMETIMES!

Where space is limited, bookcases do not belong in a hall, since the hall is not a place in which to read. But in a wide hall through the center of a house, or in the long gallery of an apartment, the owner of an important library

Dwight James Baum, Architect

AN OUTSTANDING EXAMPLE OF INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE

[PLATE 30]



William Lawrence Bottomley, Architect

A PERFECT EXAMPLE OF DRESSING-TABLE HIDDEN BEHIND PANELING WHEN NOT IN USE

[PLATE 31]

might of course line the entire wall-space with bookcases. In the house of a genuinely literary person, book-lined walls are everywhere suitable, because they and the owner's personality are inseparable. But in an average house occupied by persons who are neither scholars nor bibliophiles, nor the inheritors of a notable library, books are better bestowed elsewhere than in the entrance hall.

HALLS AND CHILDREN

We all know that, in general, the first requirement of a hall is orderliness; but we also know that a certain sort of disorder in a living-room is not out of place; a desk rather crowded with papers, a book or a work-basket left open on a chair or sofa to which we intended to return, a puzzle on its board, are merely punctuations in the story of our day.

We know perfectly well that in a hall—a front hall—no evidence of occupation belongs. And yet, a house overrun with children should not be old-maidishly prim even in its front hall—unless the children are to have no part of its expression. Giving the children their part, however, does not mean that there should be rubbers heaped in the middle of the floor, sweaters hanging over the door-knobs, a train of cars balanced over the stair-rail, hats capsized on a table or flung under a chair; the meaning is merely that a hall too austerely formal for children's use publishes that fact and affects the personality of the house.

But whether your children have free run of your house and put their personal marks—in the unmistakable way that they have—all over it, or whether they come into the front of the house only at definite times and when especially presentable, there should if possible be a set-apart entrance in every country house into which they can tramp in muddy boots and with their muddy-pawed pets, as muddily as they please.

Such an entrance might ideally lead into a vestibule that has washable walls and a floor with a drain at one side of it,

and possibly a small spigot that turns with a wrench (the wrench to be hung on an out-of-reach hook so that the youngest members of the family cannot turn the water on!) In an important house this vestibule might be lined with tiles—a perfect place for gaily patterned ones! Otherwise washable walls and a concrete floor are excellent. Storm-coats live here, and rubbers too, and if it is large enough, the children's carts and garden tools.

In an entry that I once devised, there was a platform four inches above the drain floor; on this platform two doors opened—one into the front hall and the other into the children's playroom.

A side-entry is almost an essential in every country house, for the use of all those who come in mud-splashed or rain-soaked, whether they be children or grown people.

On the ground floor of house Number 1 (Fig. 45, page 97) is a rear entrance that opens on a small covered-over brick terrace that has turned out to be a perfect place in which to leave rubbers to dry and rain-coats to drip, and in which juvenile express carts can be parked in an orderly row, as vehicles are parked in any street.

THE BABY CARRIAGE PARKING PLACE

Where to put the baby carriage is nearly always a problem in a small house, since it graces neither the front porch nor the front hall. But if there be no other where to put it, there is nothing to do but put it where you can—unless you build a little lean-to garage for it somewhere at the back, where you can later substitute a go-cart stable or a little house for other personal properties of the children.

THE HALL LIVING-ROOM

Doing away with the hall and letting the stairs ascend from the living-room is practical in every house of small size, because it is space-saving. Moreover, the staircase is often a

very attractive feature—especially in a Spanish house, or in any doubled-storied or open-raftered, gable-ceilinged room. Perhaps a gallery runs the length of one wall or more. Perhaps, on the other hand, the house is Colonial or Italian—or any style of Cottage-American—and the ceiling is low and plastered flat.

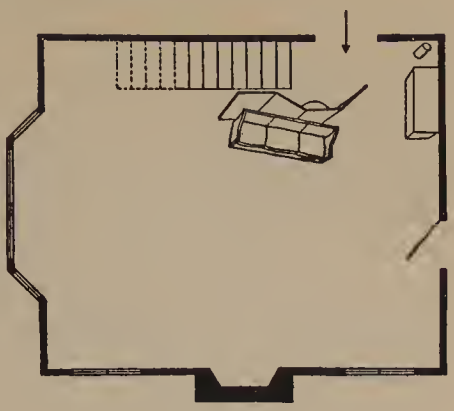


Fig. 113
SCREENED ENTRY

The primary objection to putting the stairway in the living-room or making a living-room of the hall, is that there is no privacy whatever in a room that the front door opens into, and through which servants or members of the family are continually passing. Another objection is that in cold weather the heat goes up to the roof or is drawn up the stairway to the second floor. The latter situation is easily overcome by putting a door at the head of the stairs, but a two-storied type of room in cold weather is freezing except next to the fire, where one is all too unevenly cooked. In a hot climate, however, a high-studded room that can be shuttered or opened on whichever side one chooses, and where an overhigh ceiling encourages the heat to mount as far as it can and stay there, is ideal.

The real point to consider in having the front door open directly into your living-room is whether you are so constituted that you like to leave the latch-string out and are delighted to welcome whoever walks in, or whether you are one who prefers seclusion. A hall living-room is usually defenseless against unwelcome interruptions—if interruptions are unwelcome.

The effect of a small entry can, however, be very well achieved by means of a screen, as shown in Figure 113. It might be necessary to have a five-leaf screen in order to reach the point where the stair hides the room. Or privacy can otherwise be contrived by putting paneling for a cer-

tain distance, in place of spindles, under the hand-rail of the stairs.

Many decorators suggest fixed screens, because they insist that movable ones blow down. A fixed screen is a wood partition built from floor to ceiling. One objection to a fixed screen is that it is neither wall nor furniture; a second objection is that it reduces the size of the room and, moreover, spoils its contour. An ordinary screen, on the other hand, is about six feet high, and the fact that it is distinctly furniture, and that you see the full width of ceiling and the upper part of the wall beyond it, gives you the impression of the room's full size. Danger of its blowing down is easily overcome with angle-irons attached to the frame of each leaf and screwed to the floor. It is simple to unscrew it at any time.

In the foregoing diagram the entrance side of the screen is furnished with a small half-round table against the screen; there is an umbrella-stand at the left of the door, and a chest or a settee—on which a visitor can lay his coat and hat as he enters—opposite the edge of the screen. On the room side, the screen makes an excellent background for a sofa or for a long table.

DRESSING-ROOMS FOR VISITORS

As the living-room's turn is not yet, let us go back to the entrance-hall in a house of sufficient size to include visitors' dressing-rooms. In most houses of great importance, two dressing-rooms, one for women and one for men, are put as near the door of entrance as possible. Usually these rooms are normally reception- or sitting-rooms; sometimes they are definitely equipped as coat-rooms or dressing-rooms and are used for no other purpose.

The decoration and furnishing of a special coat-room for men consists merely of a long table, one or two chairs, a mirror, perhaps, and a door leading into a lavatory. In a house where entertaining on a large scale is habitual, there are perhaps two or three long broad shelves. Tables or shelves

are more typical in New York houses than coat-hangers; but there is not the slightest objection to a hanging-rod with one or two hat-shelves over it, especially if space be limited.

In the majority of houses—palatial as well as tiny—men's coats and hats are hung in a closet by a servant or folded and left on chests or chairs in the hall. Perhaps there is a mirror and a cleared table, perhaps not.

The walls of an especial coat-room and lavatory are usually painted a medium-light tint, or perhaps they are papered with a marble paper—or any other plain finish.

If you like the word "powder-room" better than dressing-room, there is no reason why you should not so call the women's room, especially since the women who use it usually powder their noses and never dress. And yet, it has a fussy suggestion of an overfrilled, hoop-skirted and garlanded dressing-table, gilt-edged mirrors thronged with cupids—and painting on satin!

On the other hand—and more likely—it might have walls of night-blue glass punctured with stars, a silver dressing-table recessed in a cabinet, the cabinet embellished with baguettes, and other furniture fringed with mirrors and curtains—in fact, anything at all! For this is one room, at least, that can be as elaborate or as bizarre as imagination can devise. Or it can be a perfectly plain little box of a room, papered in a small diaper pattern. It would be prettiest, perhaps, with a small sprigged design on silver ground, with nothing in it except some hangers on a clothes-pole, a mirror, and a door leading to a lavatory.

A most lovely dressing-table that shuts—when not in use—into the paneling of a reception room is illustrated in Plate 33.

DRESSING-ROOM EQUIPMENT

Apart from its extreme or moderate decoration, the equipment of a dressing-room should include a mirror with a good light over it, and a dressing-table—or console, or shelf—under it. The top of the dressing-table should be glass

—a mirror, if preferred—or marble. It should never be upholstered in unremovable material that can become grimed with ground-in powder or smudges of lip-stick. On it should be a comb and brush and hand-mirror; new powder-puffs in glass-paper envelopes; a container with dark powder and another with light; a pin-cushion with safety-pins, black and white and in assorted sizes. Also—in spite of bobbed fashion—assorted varieties of hairpins.

In the house of people who rarely have much company, dressing rooms are rather superfluous, since in this day of closed motors most people arrive in a perfectly tidy condition. Those who come from a distance are shown to a bedroom, otherwise women leave their wraps—and men their coats and hats—in the hall.

It is essential, however, that there be lavatories—or at least one for the men—somewhere on the entrance floor. A lavatory is the place of all places in which colorful plumbing fixtures most suitably belong. The deeper colors—cobalt or navy-blue, jade-green, lacquer-red, or even black—are especially appropriate in any downstairs lavatory, whether it open off a dressing-room, off the hall, or off the owner's study.

THE RECEPTION-ROOM

A reception-room is rather more characteristic of a hotel, office, or institution than of a private house. In short, a reception-room is merely a small or medium-sized room with small-sized stiff furniture in it; no personal objects, and rarely more than the minimum of ornaments. A reception-room in a house is used exactly as it is elsewhere, as a sort of office in which to receive not too warmly welcomed strangers. Occasionally, rather rarely, it is attractively decorated with old woodwork or painted panels. At the moment, it is apt to be subjected to modernistic experiment; but, even so, it has no personality whatever, since, except to show some one its new decoration or to see a stranger on business, members of the family rarely cross its threshold.

THE "PARLOUR"

One is tempted to spell parlor in the early Victorian way, with a "u," because that is in keeping with the spirit of an institution that belongs characteristically in the Victorian era. Our grandparents had parlours in their houses; very often they had two, occasionally more. New York houses of the brownstone front period had almost invariably a front parlour and a back parlour, the one in front being rather more of a sitting-room, and the one in the back (usually a middle room and dark as ink) being reserved for evening use.

The New England parlour was—and still is—very stiffly furnished, with a prim white-ground wall-paper and mahogany furniture, upholstered in rep or hair-cloth. It was—and still is—sat in only on formal company occasions or on Sunday afternoons.

The parlors of the old Southern houses that remained English Georgian were identical in every detail with the drawing-rooms of to-day, and may be spelled in the modern way. To these must, of course, be added the finer houses of Massachusetts, Connecticut, and all other Atlantic States, whose interiors never succumbed to the marble and walnut craze, the black era of ebony, or the mud-and-mustard epidemic of the bad-taste era. Beautiful parlors that were, are drawing-rooms of distinction in the vernacular of to-day, and Georgian woodwork—either painted or embellished with scenic or other Colonial paper—has again come into its own.

The withdrawing-room is merely a second drawing-room set apart for evening use or for candle-lighted occasions. It corresponds to what New Yorkers used to call the back parlor, and New Englanders called the front parlor and Southerners the best parlor; we now set it apart as the music-room, or any other room that is never used except when we give a rather formal party. The party-room, however, is altogether different and will be mentioned later.

THE DRAWING-ROOM

If we were to divide the rooms of a house temperamentally, we would classify as impersonal: entrance-halls, reception-rooms, ballrooms, and music-rooms. The reason-why of the first two has been explained. The last two are essentially backgrounds. The object of a ballroom is to display an aggregation of people. The object of a music-room is to withdraw from attention—or at least it should be.

The room of intermediate temperament is the drawing-room, which should suggest the old-fashioned term of gracious but somewhat formal hospitality. It is also more than any other room dependent upon perfection of detail.

The term drawing-room is the fashionable equivalent of best parlor or the French salon, and its exactions, except in rather conservative social circles, are not in sympathy with typical modern American life. At all events, men and drawing-rooms seldom meet until after dinner, and children and drawing-rooms show each other enforced neutrality at best.

The difference between a living-room and a drawing-room is that the drawing-room demands a certain degree of formality alike in our occupations, our behavior, and our clothes, whereas the living-room is equally welcoming to us no matter what we happen to be doing, how relaxed our spines, how casual our dress, or how easy-going our character.

Whether a drawing-room or a living-room will better suit your house, depends entirely upon your own personality. If you are innately formal, if you cannot endure to have anything out of place, if you like the conventional rather than the unconventional, if you have no inclination to sit otherwise than as at a dinner party or in a box at the opera, if you have neither dogs (outdoor dogs) nor children; if, in other words, no one ever disturbs the perfect order of your surroundings, a drawing-room would be as suitable a living-room as you could wish.

If, on the other hand, the room belongs to your husband

Mrs. Reginald Peirce, Decorator

WHERE ENGLAND, FRANCE AND COLONIAL AMERICAN COMBINE IN HARMONY

[PLATE 32]

A DESK THAT IS INVITING TO USE HAS EVERY NECESSITY SUPPLIED, BUT IS CLUTTERED WITH NOTHING ELSE

[PLATE 33]

and to your children quite as much as to you; if you have sons and daughters who are inclined to sprawl at length rather than sit up straight, and who like to put their heels up on the sofa; if dogs as well as the younger children stand all over the cushions in preference to standing on the floor; or if part of the room is in inevitable confusion because of the momentary occupation of this one or that, nothing more unsuitable than a drawing-room, either in name or in fact, can be imagined.

However, let us suppose that you like a room of formality. Whether it is to be your only sitting-room or merely one of many, it will follow more or less faithfully a rather set formula in the arrangement of its contents.

THE PLACING OF DRAWING-ROOM FURNITURE

The first requisite of a drawing-room is grace of arrangement, with perfection of detail. Its comfort must in no way suggest relaxation. The seats, chairs, and sofas may perhaps have springs—or perhaps only cushions—but they are rarely, if ever, deeply upholstered. The typical drawing-room chairs and sofas have carved-wood frames, and little bolster-pads on the centers of the wood arms. Furniture that is particularly suitable for a drawing-room includes all the more simple Louis XV, Louis XVI, and Directoire French examples, as well as the work of the eighteenth-century cabinet-makers, whether English or American.

The arrangement of a drawing-room is as symmetrically balanced as possible, and the room should quite distinctly suggest the tranquil serenity of a great lady prepared to receive her friends. Furnishings and ornaments are displayed to their best advantage, and the arrangement of chairs and sofas is planned carefully for pleasantly convenient conversational grouping. There must always be a general circle of one or two sofas, with chairs and perhaps stools drawn near, in which as large a group as one is likely to have for lunch or dinner can be seated. In a room that is large enough, there

should be various other groups of chairs, so that twos and twos can sit apart in the usual after-dinner convention.

A diagram of a typical drawing-room is shown in Figure 114, page 345. One could not look at its plan and suppose it anything else. The essential group includes two settees by the fire and the long sofa opposite, each with its surrounding chairs and stools or benches. There are plenty of tables, and there is a lamp on each as well as side-lights. The individual lamps need not be brilliant, but there should be many, because of their decorative effect as well as for the pleasantness of light.

The furniture is all small in scale. There is not a really big sofa or chair in the room. Stools and small benches play a very important part, because they face in every direction. Drawing-room stools and benches have upholstered tops of velvet, brocade or needle-point. Wood-topped stools or benches are convenient in almost any room, since they can be used either as tables or to sit on. The upholstered drawing-room stool or bench, however, is used for nothing but to sit on, especially when talking to some one close by.

THE COLOR OF A DRAWING-ROOM

A drawing-room is usually light in color. Most typically the walls are lacquered white or cream or very pale green, possibly accented with gold or gray-blue, or grayed orchid, or light yellow or chartreuse—or stronger color if one chooses. The walls are most often paneled. Perhaps the field of each panel is decorated, or inset with paintings; or perhaps it is left plain and a picture or mirror is hung against it. Typical also of drawing-rooms are cabinets with shelves for the display of porcelains or jades or ivories.

Since the character of a drawing-room is inflexibly formal and conservative, these qualities should not be overlooked. Each object of furniture should look innocent of work. Papers—filed or otherwise—have no place on a drawing-room writing table; a work-basket is not admitted. An

embroidery frame is considered quite in key, however, since it connotes spare-time occupation rather than absorbed attention! (The fiction of this explanation is manifest to any one who watches modern petit-point enthusiasts in almost any drawing-room.) At all events, no one sits in a drawing-room and does the family mending! Nor does one glue, or cut out pictures, or hammer things. Those of us who love energetic occupations must stay in utilitarian living-rooms or build ourselves a workshop.

In average houses of many rooms, the drawing-room is used at certain times in the day—to take afternoon tea in, perhaps, or to meet in before dinner and to sit in for a while afterwards. But the typical American family leaves it for company and lives in the library, the living-room, the book-room, the study (or den), or the sitting-room. The drawing-room is essentially a room of beauty, and sometimes—if it be lived in—it is a room of enchantment.

A DRAWING-ROOM-LIVING-ROOM

We need a name to express the hybrid room that is equally a drawing-room and a living-room. It is a room that, while having many formal characteristics, is utterly a room of charm because it is lived in. It has not quite the personality of a living-room, because it has no easy-going characteristics.

The principal difference between the true drawing-room that is set aside for company, and the one that is lived in, is that the latter has easy-chairs and comfortable sofas, as well as others that are somewhat more reserved in character.

The big chair illustrated in Plate 26 is not at all in keeping with a formal drawing-room, and neither are the cigarette boxes and match-box on the near-by table. The desk, moreover, is a big one, and the opposite wall of the room has set-in bookcases; otherwise the taffeta curtains, the light-green brocade of the upholstery, and the jade and crystal ornaments are suggestive of a drawing-room.

In a drawing-room-living-room, the writing-table should

always be serviceable—either a secretary or a drop-front desk or a knee-hole one of size, with implements of utility on its blotter and many drawers in which the inevitable accumulations on every much-used writing-table are kept safely out of sight. In other words, the writing-table, though it is fitted with practical writing implements, is still an article of embellishment as well as one of utility.

Slip-covers, of course, have no place in drawing-rooms except as summer-coverings. But slip-covers and all other devices of beauty combined with utility and comfort are suitable to the room which is the very heart of the American home—the living-room!

THE LIVING-ROOM

One dreams of the living-room as a room filled with sunshine and appealing color; with comfortable furnishings and many books and flowers or plants; a room in which a big fire burns on cold days and evenings, and in which many lamps are lighted at night; a room—if it be in the country—that during the warm months of the year looks out upon a garden.

You know how well-worn, beautifully-polished hunting boots look? The perfect living-room should look the same: in no way worn through, but thoroughly easy and comfortable in fit—and with every evidence of having been long used and cared for.

Nothing is more out of keeping with the spirit of a living-room than to have it filled with brand-new furniture and upholstery, brand-new books in uniform bindings, curtains and over-curtains that keep out all the light and air; a fireplace that has no mark of fire-smoke and no trace of ashes on its hearth; a room with not a single potted plant or flower, not a sign of well-worn usefulness anywhere about it. Be chary, therefore, of reupholstering or recovering the living-room furniture simply because it shows signs of having been used—and enjoyed. If there are too many evidences

of really worn-through shabbiness, then perhaps do over the worst pieces; but rather than conspicuous newness, even a patch or two will do no harm—until the time comes when an article really has to be made over somewhat new.

The living-room may be utterly beautiful; but if it looks self-consciously fine, or if you feel that it is unsuitable for hard use and that its charm would be lost were its color to fade or its furnishings to become worn, then let us call it a parlor or a drawing-room, since a genuine living-room it is not.

The most ideal living-room that can be imagined—the sort that we love to go into and hate to leave—is a room of comfortable size, with windows on the long walls, flooded with sunshine, and—in the country—filled with flowers. In fact, if it be in the country, let us hope for windows on three sides, and have at least one of them looking out upon, or opening into, a garden. And let us hope that there is a welcoming log fire on every day that the weather is cold enough. Books there must be—lots of them; and a table spread like a small news-stand with magazines. There must be a much-used desk and constantly sat-in chairs, and for those of us who love animals, a dog or cat lying on the rug before the fire. Or, best of all, there may be a baby building blockhouses on the rug beside the dog; or a bigger child curled up in an armchair reading.

Some of the qualifications listed above are not always possible—especially in a city apartment. And what we cannot have, we must do as best we can without.

A living-room *can* be inviting without a fire; it *can* be appealing without a near-by garden; in the city it may have charm without a flower. It might even have appeal without a book, but it *must* have light and pleasing color and comfortable furnishings conveniently and becomingly placed. It must also express the combined needs and tastes of the family that lives in it. In other words, it may be without books if no one in the family especially loves them. It must perhaps be without flowers in the winter, unless some one

in the family cares enough to grow them in pots. It would be difficult to make a living-room inviting without a flower in the summertime.

ESSENTIAL LIVING-ROOM DETAILS

Essential to every perfect living-room is light to read or work or sew by, both in the daytime and at night. There may be a number of lights that are for becomingness to the room—like those in the drawing-room—but there must be others for utility. There must be one on the desk or writing-table that brightly illumines the paper you write on without casting the shadow of your hand or blinding you with a glare; and, no matter which chair or which corner of the sofa you choose, there must be a good light that turns on at your shoulder.

The color of the room should be soothing rather than exciting in tone, since it must be restful and sympathetic whether you are glad or sad, well or ill. If you paper the walls, be sure that the design is not one so decided in pattern that it unceasingly interrupts. Attention-attracting papers are quite all right in halls, dining-rooms, bathrooms and even spare rooms, but are altogether bad for a room that you must live in, rest in, and think in.

For comfort, chairs and sofas must be low and deep and completely restful. If the sofa tempts you to lie down on it, then it is just the sort of sofa that the living-room ought to have! (Not that you are likely to receive your friends flat on your back, or that visitors will throw themselves full length!) If its chairs be so low and deep that getting out of them again is difficult, no matter! Going away is the last thing a perfect living-room should make you think of.

One might describe a comfortable chair as one that completely supports you in a position of ease. The most uncomfortable chair ever imagined is the typical parlor-car chair that slaps you across the shoulders and then hollows away from your back the rest of the way down. Moreover, it

has an overwide carpet-stiff convex seat on which you bounce about continuously. For reading nothing is more comfortable than to sit in a chair that fits you comfortably, with a cushion on your knees and a book on the cushion. Personally, I like very soft springs; but this is a matter of preference. At all events, a chair-seat should be slightly lower at the back than at the front. One that slides downward from back to front edge—is desperately uncomfortable for anyone who sits normally straight.

If you are one who likes to read lying down, the right-sized small square-edged hair-cushion on your chest, with book-edge on this, is extremely practical. An attached book-rack for use on your own pet sofa or chair is rarely a becoming adjunct to a piece of furniture; but if you like it and use it, this is in some way expressed and makes it perfectly acceptable. In other words, the living-room expresses beauty when it may, but its foremost requirement is comfort and suitability to practical use.

THE WRITING-DESK

A perfect desk is one that invites you to write on it. A desk ornamented with irrelevant objects that leave scarcely any space on which to lay a sheet of paper, and no elbow-room—and probably neither pens, sharpened pencils, nor fluid ink to write with—is not inviting. A desk or writing-table should have a big sheet of blotting-paper. A flat sheet is much better than a small pad with high interfering corners that get in the way of your wrist and, if in any way ornamented, catch a thread in your sleeve.

There should be fresh ink, new pens, sharpened pencils, stamps, mucilage, shears, and paper-cutter, as well as plenty of paper and envelopes, ready at hand. (See Plate 33.) My own favorite writing-table (Plate 57) is an architect's drafting-table with a top six feet by a little over three feet wide, and at standing height. Few people would care for this, nor would many be likely to choose a drop-leaf kitchen-table,

which is my next favorite. But the point is that a writing-table—or whichever other piece of furniture you use most—should be adjusted to your own personal requirements of comfort.

The fact that I happen to prefer to sit on a high office stool hour after hour, and day after day, is no reason that any one else should do the same. Nor could any piece of furniture be more impossible to fit into a room than a full-sized drafting-table—except perhaps an electric bath-cabinet!

FOR CARD PLAYERS

There must be two bridge-lamps that can stand at opposite corners of every card-table—unless there be indirect lighting or a chandelier that affords genuinely bright light. For a card-playing family that has much company, nothing is more convenient, if there be room enough, than a permanently set bridge-table, so that if one cares to play one need not wait to have a table set up and cards and score-pads brought out. This is not practical except in the corner of a very large room, or in a separate room that is used only for cards. A bridge-table that is always in readiness is shown in Plate 63.

On the other hand, a tea-table perpetually set with an empty array is not an object of suitability, since outside of *Alice in Wonderland* the tea hour is not perpetual. Nor can the tea-tray stand always waiting with water boiling, cream in the pitcher, lemon in the saucer, cakes, sandwiches, and so forth. This is noted merely because modern taste in every way eliminates that which is useless.

Every object in every room should be necessary to comfort, to utility, or to beauty. Certain rooms accentuate these three requirements more than others. The living-room accents comfort; the kitchen, utility; the drawing-room, beauty; which must not be thought to mean that the accenting of one requirement eliminates the need of the other two.

SMALL MORNING ROOM IN AUTHOR'S NEW YORK APARTMENT

[PLATE 34]

Bruce Price, Architect

WHERE CHARM IS COMBINED WITH DIGNITY

[PLATE 35]

LIVING-ROOM AND DRAWING-ROOM CONTRASTED

The two diagrams on this and the following pages are identical in floor plan, but entirely different in the character of their furnishings. Figure 114 is a drawing-room; Figure 115 is a living-room.

The drawing-room, as already noted, is furnished with as many small-sized chairs as possible, arranged for the sole

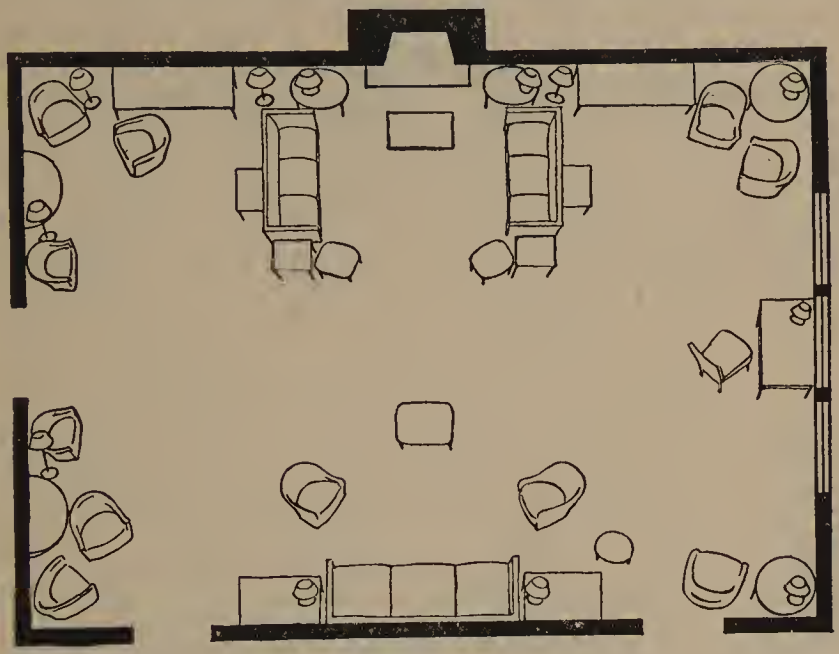


Fig. 114
UNMISTAKABLY A DRAWING-ROOM

object of conversation. The consoles, A, and the cabinets, B, serve no purpose but that of embellishment. Over the consoles are tall mirrors, and the shelves of the cabinets are used for ornaments. The tables on either side of the wall sofa have tall lamps on them and a few conspicuously beautiful ornaments. Every lamp in a drawing room should, of course, be chosen for beauty of ornament rather than for utility. But if the drawing-room were also a living-room, the sofas and chairs would be somewhat larger in scale, the cabinets would probably be replaced by bookcases, and the lights by the fireplace and on either side of the long sofa would necessarily be good to read by.

The living-room is totally different in character. The furniture takes up much more room, the sofa in front of the window is huge, the chairs are wide and deep and low and utterly restful. The furniture is not grouped for conversation with visitors, but solely for the comfort of the family. The secretary is lighted from the left and is adequate in size. On the refectory table is a big lamp in the center and magazines in rows and at least one bowl of flowers. If the

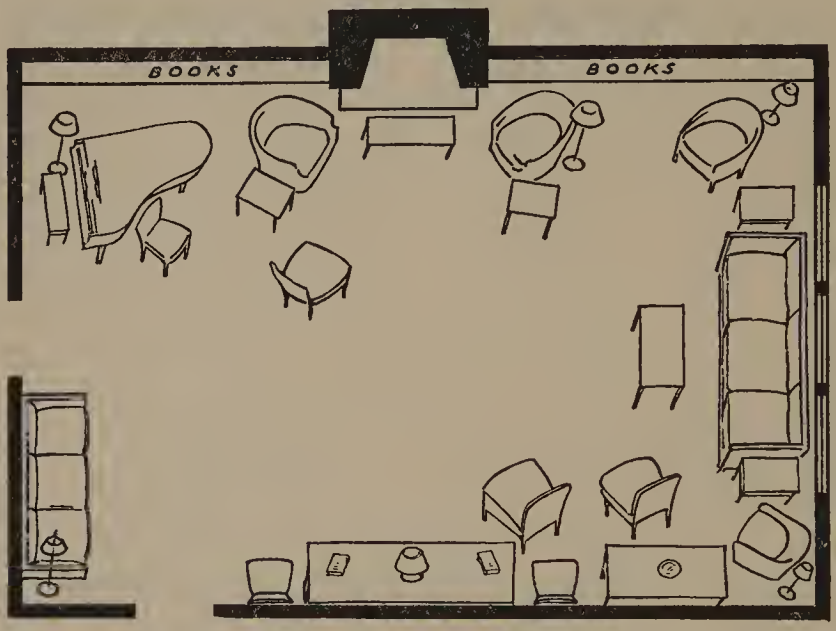


Fig. 115
OBVIOUSLY A LIVING-ROOM

owner of the room is musical rather than occupied with writing, the piano is perhaps turned around and put where the secretary stands. A radio would probably stand against the right-hand wall between the book-shelves and the windows.

RADIO CABINETS

Many radios are perfectly inoffensive, and one or two are good-looking enough to go in almost any living-room. Others, however, are just about the most outstanding examples of vulgarity possible to find. If the make you happen to

Fig. 116
UNINVITING NARROW-END FIREPLACE AND WINDOW

Fig. 117
ANOTHER UNINVITING POSITION OF FIREPLACE

like comes in a cabinet that is unendurable, it may be as well to remember that it can be made less conspicuous by being cut down. If this does not help, vulgar ornateness can perhaps be chiseled off, and paint always works wonders. (For plastic operations on furniture, see Index.)

ROOMS THAT ARE HARD TO FURNISH

A difficult room to endow with charm, or even to overcome the inborn awkwardness of, is one that is long and narrow and has a fireplace across one narrow end. And when its only windows are across the opposite narrow end, it is almost impossible to live in, unless it is so little that a sofa can just about stretch the wall between the windows and the fireplace. (Fig. 116.) But a

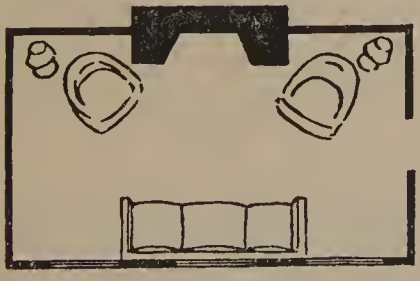
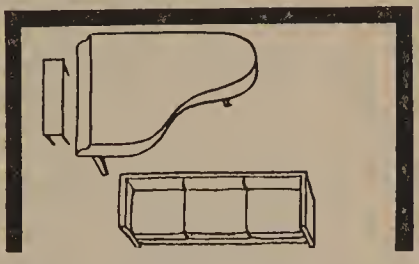


Fig. 118
CHARM OF WIDE WALL FIREPLACE AND WINDOW



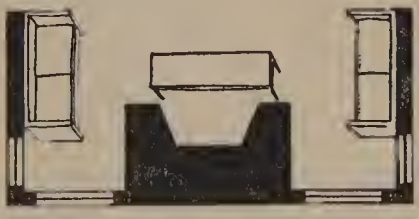


Fig. 119
BAD ARRANGEMENT OF FIREPLACE AND WINDOWS

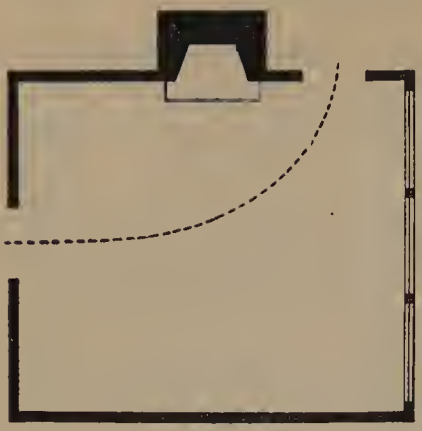


Fig. 120
AWKWARD PASSAGEWAY

Fig. 121
LIGHT-EFFACING SCREEN

room of this plan, if it be of hospitable size, is hopeless; because hospitable is just what it can't be without elbow-room around the fireplace and windows near enough to be of use. A narrow-end fireplace is never as amenable to charm as one that is centered on the long wall.

A big, long room, such as is shown in Figure 117, necessarily divides itself into two units; one group near the fireless windows, and another over in the windowless darkness around the fireplace. Furnished as a living-room and dining-room in one, this is as hard a problem as can be found. If you put the table near the fire, there is nowhere to sit evenings. If you put the table at the window, you sit in the dining-room by day—unless you carry the table back and forth. But, no matter whether it be furnished as two or as one, a long distance between the chimney and the windows has no architectural excuse except that of unavoidable necessity—in an apartment building, for instance, where one room in one apartment may have to be sacrificed to the better plan of others.

A room such as I have sketched in Figure 118 furnishes itself. On the other hand, a room such as Figure 119—an actual room in a Park Avenue apartment house—is as hard to do anything with as the far-end fireplace. It is utterly ruined by the blockading chimney. If the mantel-breast were flat, or

if it were on another wall, the room would be a lovely one. But with a mantel dividing the window space into two closet-shaped alcoves, you cannot sit near the windows except behind the chimney. Doors make two long sofas impossible. The best you can do is to put a low table in the window, a sofa on each side beyond, and a sofa in the middle—which everyone going in and out of the door on either side has to walk around. It is not a blockade, because you enter within the fireplace circle; but the room is cut in half.

Figure 120 illustrates a bad position of the dining-room door, which turns the space around the fireplace into a passageway.

Figure 121 illustrates an unpleasing use of a screen, which cuts off all the light of the window.

WHEN LIVING-ROOM, DINING-ROOM AND ENTRANCE-HALL ARE ONE

Using a screen to make a vestibule has already been shown in Figure 113. In the little diagram, Figure 121a, a screen also makes a vestibule and hides the room from the stranger at the door. A room with windows down both long sides is, of course, perfection to furnish. In fact, it is almost impossible to make such a room unattractive, if the color be good and the furniture comfortable.

THE THREE-IN-ONE ROOM

For the three-in-one room of charm, it is essential to keep to the character of the living-room. In short, do not put sitting-room furniture at one end and dining-room furniture at the other, but make the whole a living-room. The table on which you dine can

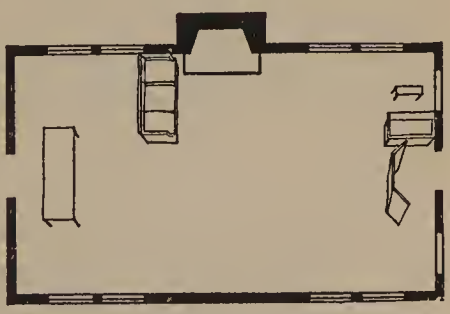


Fig. 121a
AN IDEAL 3-IN-1 ROOM

be made into a library table when not set for a meal. This is one occasion when a refectory table or a gate-leg table is not only suitable but essential. In any case, choose a table that will look like a living-room table, with a lamp and a few easily removed objects on it, rather than shout its dining-room character between meals. A much better effect is achieved if you have different chairs instead of the eight or ten replicas that are customary in a dining-room. Four side-chairs might be alike, with an armchair of a different style for the head of the table, an armchair of another style for the foot, and a pair or two of odd side-chairs to be used in another part of the room when not needed for the dining-table. Instead of a sideboard, choose a chest or a commode with so little on it in the way of ornament that it can easily be cleared and used as a serving-table at meal-times.

Dining-room furniture at one end of the room is a mistake, not because of any attempt to pretend that the room serves only as a living-room and that you have a dining-room elsewhere, but because it is as disturbing to unity as though the partition between two different rooms had fallen down. On the other hand, the dining-room end, when set for a meal, does not give the impression of being out of place, because a living-room background is cozy and homelike and altogether appealing to dine in. But a dining-room is *not* appealing as a room to live in, unless you can have sitting-room furniture in it and thereby cause it to lose the characteristics of a dining-room.

Where one room serves two purposes permanently, the living-room personality is without question the one to choose. Remember also that the dining-table should be unusually low as well as small.

A FEW COLOR SUGGESTIONS

Perhaps we should have considered earlier those two essentials, color and light. No room that is filled with the gloom of twilight by day and little spots of glimmer at night can possibly suggest that those who occupy it, LIVE! And in a

living-room, quite as much as otherwhere, one cannot evade the subject of color.

The need of adding some warmth of color to a north room that is to be occupied in a cold winter climate is self-evident. A gray-blue fireless room on a cold day would be about as welcoming as the interior of a foodless ice-box. But a cold blue room lighted by the flames of a generous open fire is at once made friendly—especially if books or cushions or flowers or ornaments add color. It is the color and light of a fire, by the way, that add beauty to a room, not its heat. Were heat the sole object of a fire, it would be far more evenly and comfortably distributed by means of steam pipes than by a fire, in front of which you are too hot, and away from which you freeze.

If the windows face north and are, moreover, rather small, it will be safest, perhaps, to follow the most obvious rule of decoration that exists; which is to paint a sunless room sunlight-yellow. It should be remembered, however, that the yellow which is the color of the sun is as light a tint as possible, and that it should have a polished surface. Dark or pumpkin yellow with a mat finish is light-absorbing to the last degree.

For a room that has too small or too few windows, a pale yellow that has a lemon hue, or that is lacquered slightly creamish white, is the best wall and trim color possible; it will go with slip-covers of the gayest, most colorful pattern that can be found. Glazed chintz with white ground is charming while it is new, but then——! They say it can be reglazed this side of England, but it is very apt to return from the ordinary cleaner's looking like the kind of cotton material used for the underclothes of inexpensive dolls. On the other hand, endless chintzes can go into the tub and come out looking new, and can for that reason be both light in color and serviceable. But a big sample should be washed before buying. The pattern is best that is very much covered, since the white ground cannot be expected to stand hard use. Cost, by the way, is no criterion of wear. Expensive

materials do sometimes wear wonderfully, but sometimes those of highest price neither wash, clean, nor endure the sun. One of the most expensive chintzes ever put on the market faded out completely in three weeks. It is true that the very cheap chintzes are less apt to last than the best ones, but when they do launder and stand the sun, they do so perfectly. After all, it is not a great waste of time to wash half of a sample and to hang it in the sun for a week. If it will hold its color after a week's test, so that you cannot tell which half of the sample is which, its color is obviously pretty safe.

Try wall-paper the same way. If it fades *at all*, beware of it!

For a living-room that has sufficient light, the walls at present preferred are of pine. Walls painted a pinkish-pine color are also very good.

CERTAIN LOVELY ROOMS

Perhaps the best way to describe living-rooms that have charm of color would be to describe a few that seem to me to have the most appeal. The one I like best of any I ever did myself is of medium size, low-ceilinged, almost square, with windows on three sides (Fig. 122). On the center wall at the left is a bay-window suggestive of an eighteenth-century London shop; meaning merely that it is a little boxed-on, small-paned picture-window that reaches neither to the ceiling nor to the floor, and is just deep enough to hold a collection of Japanese gardens in three square flat pots and two round ones on its display-case window-sill.

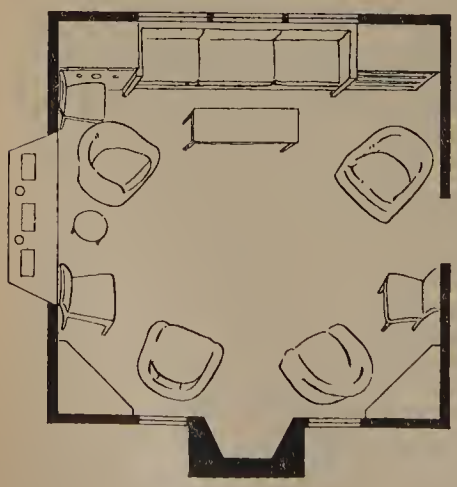
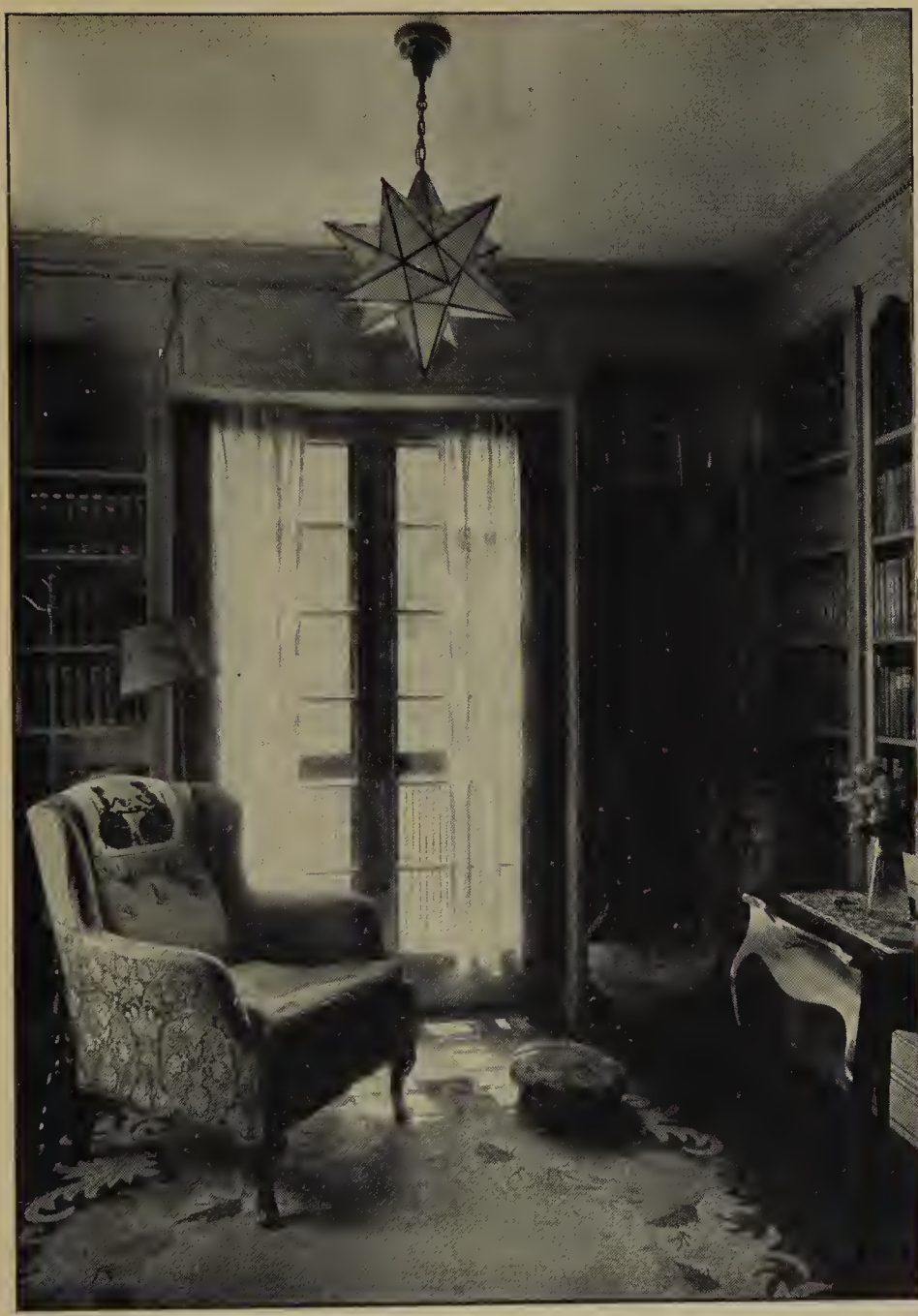


Fig. 122
LITTLE ROOM OF DELECTABILITY



Dwight James Baum, Architect

DELIGHTFUL USE OF SMALL SPACE: THE ENTIRE WIDTH OF THE ROOM IS SHOWN IN THE PICTURE

[PLATE 36]

Bruce Price, Architect

A DELIGHTFUL MAN'S ROOM OF ENGLISH TYPE—IN WHICH HIS FAMILY ARE OBVIOUSLY MADE WELCOME

[PLATE 37]

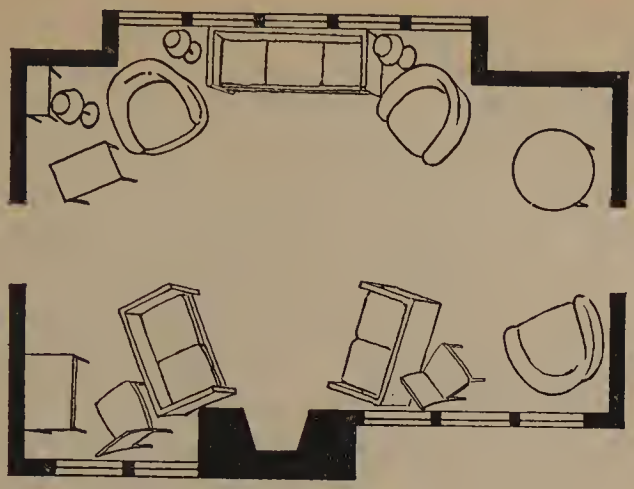


Fig. 123
PERSONABLE IRREGULARITY

There is a fireplace on another wall between two windows, and a row of windows on the side opposite.

The house is in a hunting country, and the chintz, most suitably, has hunting scenes on a pinkish putty-colored ground, while the whole room is lacquered a lighter tint of the same color. There are green garlands dividing the design of the chintz into set pictures. There is other green in the foliage, and brown in the tree-trunks, earth, and horses. But the browns and creams and greens are made gay by the vivid geranium pink of many hunting-coats.

There are curtains of the chintz set under wood of the window-framing, and these are drawn together at night. The glass-curtains are of thin manila-colored gauze and draw across the windows on pull-cords, or are pulled back, as one chooses.

There are open bookcases that frame the wall of entrance, and frame the bay-window wall opposite. On either side of the fireplace are two wing-chairs covered in hunting-pink leather, as is also a big sofa against the long window opposite the fireplace. As the room is small, the sofa is not unreasonably far away. In front of it is a magazine-stand. Two corner cupboards are fitted as individual writing-desks, one for the owner and one for his wife. On either side of

the sofa are built-in tables with shelves under one and a radio under the other. Two deep chairs near the sofa are covered with the chintz. The floor is laid with wide boards painted brownish-pine and partly covered with bright hook-rugs in faun-browns and geranium-pink. Other chairs are covered with brown calico or with Normandy petticoat calico of orange-red, with a small design in cream and brown. In other words, the color is faun, pink, geranium, blue-green, cream, and brown.

I know descriptions without photographs are deadly dull, but I can't get a photograph of the room sketched in Figure 123 because it is not yet built—let alone furnished! But I know exactly what is going into it and what it will be like. The walls, bookcases, and trim are to be of very pale olive (pea-soup) green lacquer; furniture, American birch, pine, and maple. Floor will be smooth-grained maple. Hangings and half of the slip-covers of light olive-green, semi-glazed chintz, with huge bouquets of varicolored flowers in brickish-pink, greens, delphinium-blue, and deep creams. Other pieces of furniture upholstered in brickish-pink and sand-diaper-patterned woolen material, slightly harsh and durable

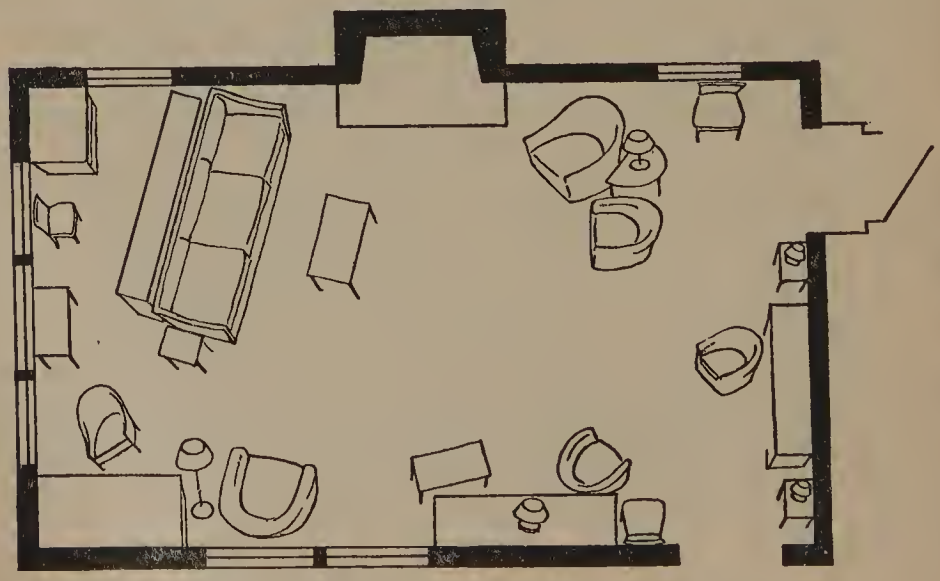


Fig. 124

SURROUNDING WINDOWS PRODUCE AN EFFECT OF SPACE

(it is to be hoped) in texture. Colored prints of French gardens, and lots of color in the books.

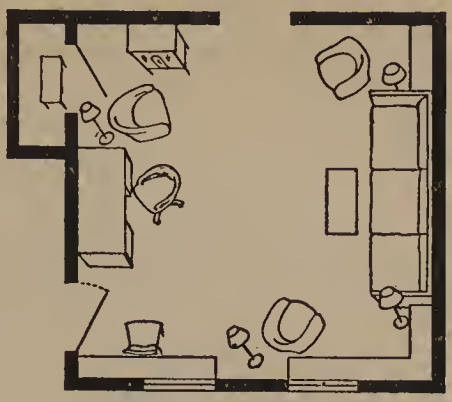


Fig. 125
COMFORTABLE FURNISHING OF SMALL LIVING-ROOM

Figure 124 is a diagram of my own living-room in Massachusetts, which is shown photographically in Plates 46 and 50. The walls and trim are slightly greenish cream; floor painted green, ceiling cream. Slip-covers and curtains of light blue-green, with a fragile design in cream, blue, mauve, lemon, and brown. Quilted chair, high chest back of sofa, and a bookcase not photographed, lacquer-red. (Wood box back of sofa.)

Figure 125 (also Plate 34) is very small for a living-room, but it is comfortable for a small family, and its color is a perfectly defined triad. It has a light fawn-color wall; furniture covering of mustard-yellow chintz, with Chinese design in neutral gray, brown, blue-green, yellow, and black. The central figure of a Buddha is bright blue. The standing lamps are green. The chair shown in the picture is black. On the other side of the room is a Chinese red-lacquer desk, with three-quarter-length portrait over it, framed with a narrow black-and-gold molding. A big portrait with a wide frame in a little room would be entirely out of scale. Two old Chinese paintings on wood, framed in peacock-blue, are hung on the doors, and several jade trees are in peacock-blue cloisonné pots; the lamps and ornaments are all Chinese. The Radiola has its legs cut down, and two jade trees stand on either end of it without interfering with the aerial. The loud-speaker stands in a closet.

The room shown in Plate 35 has walls of vivid, seemingly translucent emerald. Rug, very soft brownish neutral purple. Curtains, lemon-yellow brocade. Beautiful old wood chairs are upholstered in damask or in needle-point in green-

cream and rose on a deep grayed-purple background. Furniture, Chippendale and Sheraton. Many ornaments of crystal and jade.

DOORS OR DOORWAYS?

In a northern climate, a living-room should if possible have doors. Not merely because draughts sweeping in from the stair-hall perpetually disturb its temperature, but because it is sometimes pleasant to be able to shut yourself in. If you like open doors, it is always easy enough to let them stand wide; but if there are no doors, there are times—before the furnace is lighted in the autumn, and after it has gone out in the spring—when the living-room, shut in, is easily made warm. And there are countless other times—if you are not feeling very well, or are having a business conversation—when it is convenient to be able to shut a protecting door. Doors are an essential of privacy; which is, after all, one of the essentials of civilization.

In the far South, doorless doorways are all right if one likes them, but shutter-doors are most practical. There is a "louver" door of commerce that is made with slats that open encouragingly to drafts, and likewise draftlessly close (when they don't stick!).

THE LIBRARY OR THE BOOK-ROOM

The name Library brings two pictures to mind. The first is of the most comfortable, the most restful, the most inviting room in the house; in other words, it is a living-room filled with books. The second picture suggests nothing so much as a mausoleum built by a newly-rich man for unread books interred in crypts of glass. A human room filled with books is usually called something else—living-room, study, book-room, or "father's room."

Just why is not very clear, but the word Library means a room that is importantly big, scholarly, perhaps, but rather pompous—and very, very expensive. On the other

hand, we think of a book-room as a nice, comfortable, homey sort of place—or is it rather precious?

At all events, a book-room is apt to be small, though, of course, it need not be. At its very best the book-shelves occupy every inch of room from floor to ceiling. They are open shelves—not a glass front among them. (If the bindings have to be put behind glass, then label the room a library.) Book-room books are in every variety of bindings. A few shelves of sets, other shelves of somewhat matched mixtures, still others of single books of every size; tall ones, little ones, thick ones, thin ones, ranged together according to subjects. Fascinating shelves! Their very variety would turn the most indifferent of us into book-lovers.

An ideal book-room might be no more than big enough to hold an easy-chair, with a book-rest on it, or apart from it. There should be a shelf or two that pull out like the writing-boards of office desks, for convenient use when necessary.

The room illustrated in Plate 36 is no bigger than the picture shows. The lantern hangs in the exact center of the ceiling. Opposite the window is the door of entrance, and the walls are solidly lined with books.

The library-study of a notable author, illustrated in Plate 37, is one of the most livable rooms imaginable. The wainscot and bookcases are of dark oak; there is an Elizabethan mantel of great beauty on the wall facing the book shelves shown in the photograph. Other book-shelves are out of the picture. The curtains and several chair-covers are of crewel embroidery in brilliant orange and green on sand-colored linen; the small sofa in the foreground is of sand-colored wool-damask; the long sofa is of morocco leather; the big chair (with another one out of the picture) is covered in a very gay linen on a burnt-orange ground. The desk back of the small sofa with a daughter's doll on it is of green lacquer. The Eastern rug repeats the brown, orange, and green colors of the room.

It is not necessary that the walls of a library be completely lined with books, but books should really dominate

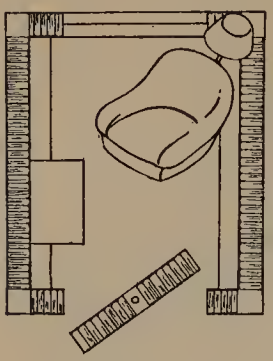


Fig. 126
A WINDOW, A CHAIR, AND BOOKS!

the room; otherwise it is a living-room or a sitting-room. It is rather pretentious to call a room a library that is not filled with books—unless their value makes up for their quantity. A room lined with novels might be the fiction room, or the room of romance, or the yellow-back room, or what you choose; but it is really neither a library nor a book-room. All of which makes no difference at all, except as it bears upon the personality suggested by names.

Having criticized glass-front bookcases, I should add that any great amount of glass genuinely handicaps the personality of a room. Very choice books that must be put behind glass would perhaps better be considered as locked-away treasures than as furnishings. A really beautiful bookcase or a bookcase-secretary is embellishing to a drawing-room or living-room, because furniture is in character there, rather than books. But books, to be inviting and to seem alive, should stand in welcoming rows on friendly open shelves.

A little book-closet can be an entirely satisfactory spot, if it be big enough for a window, three walls of books on open shelves, and an easy-chair. One that I know of has a door covered with book-shelves that swings on a central steel pole like a turnstyle (Fig. 126). What more could one ask, except a fire and room for a dog—and perhaps the latter might squeeze in though the former is doubtful.

SPEAKING OF DOGS

Let us not forget to mention—and this is as good a place as any—that very necessary piece of furniture, a bench for your friend the dog. In hot climates no provision other than the floor is necessary for a big dog; but in cold weather there is a strong draught on every floor. On many floors—just put

your hand down and feel it blow! Dogs run out and come in with damp coats, and lie down on a draughty floor; no wonder those without a stick of furniture of their own are often crippled with rheumatism long before they are old!

A proper bench should be at least ten inches above the floor and be surrounded on three sides—like a solid wood armchair. It is made in general accord with the furniture of the room and has a snugly fitting carpet that matches—as well as possible—the rug or carpet of the floor; and it is made suitable in size to the size of the dog.

THE DINING-ROOM

An east exposure for those who go to breakfast—and most Americans do—is very pleasant if it can be contrived. But if one must choose between morning sun in the dining-room and morning sun in the sitting-room, there can be little question whether it be better that husband read the headlines in the paper by sunlight, or whether wife shall have hours of sun in the morning-room or sitting-room—or wherever she spends the greater part of her day and does whatever it is that she has to do.

In building your own house in the country or on a lot that is big enough to give you light on all sides, you can place your house purposely so as to give each room whichever exposure you like best. Ideally, perhaps, a dining-room should face southeast, so that it may have lunch-time light as well as morning sun. At all events, whether it be sun-flooded or partially electric-lighted, the decoration of the dining-room can be as colorful as you please—since it is the one room in the house that should express cheer rather than rest. If it can have sun, so much the better. If it cannot, then it must be made as gay by night-light as possible.

And yet it is essential that a dining-room express certain conventions of form. Dining-room furniture need never be more than moderately comfortable. The dining-table is not the place at which to sit and dream, or to brood,

or to work out problems. Since one goes into the dining-room to eat—conversation being an accompaniment rather than an object—the furnishings should be centered on the table.

One is supposed to eat more tranquilly in an unencumbered room. At the moment it is the fashion to keep one's silver in a closet or a safe, and to put out only those things which have decorative value. The tea-set on its tray is displayed in many—in fact, most—dining-rooms. Otherwise candlesticks or candelabra, or an especially beautiful tray or tankard, or a pair of coolers, is chosen to ornament the dining-room sideboard or consoles, and the rest of the silver is put away.

Dining-room walls are equally suitable with much decoration or none at all. Especially appropriate to dining-rooms, as well as to halls, are panoramic papers which merely suggest that one is eating amid pleasant scenery. If one eats often alone, the companionship of a view such as that of the "Voyage en Suisse," or the "Fêtes de Versailles," or the purely scenic "Eldorado," or the friendliness and gaiety of "Scenic America," shown in Plate 39, can be attested to by everyone who has long lived with any of these.

A plain-walled dining-room has always been looked upon as the most suitable place to hang old portraits. At one time the color of the typical dining-room was red. Now it is most often cream, or putty, or light gray-green, or blue-green, or yellow-green, or yellow. The dining-room walls, as a matter of fact, might be decorated in a hundred ways—and each one a perfect way for whoever makes it express his or her personality. A plain-walled dining-room is illustrated in Plate 38, which shows a lovely Georgian room with a portrait over the mantel and Queen Anne furniture.

DINING-ROOM FURNITURE

The essentials are the dining-table and the needful number of chairs. This is all the furniture that is *necessary;* to it,

Pleasants Pennington, Architect

A GEORGIAN ROOM OF CLASSIC DISTINCTION

[PLATE 38]

Firm of Kenneth M. Murchison, Architects

THE FURNITURE IS EMERALD GREEN

[PLATE 39]

of course, you add as much or as little as you choose to find room for. But remember that empty space is far better than furniture that crowds close to the table. Perhaps you have room for a sideboard, or even for a pair of them. Or perhaps you choose consoles instead. You, of course, put a serving-table near the door to the pantry, select as many chairs as you need, and perhaps a screen; but even in the biggest room this is enough.

If you are furnishing a new room with old furniture of your own, you naturally adjust it as best you may. But if you are buying furniture, a much better effect will be achieved by avoidance of duplication.

With chairs of the type of Chippendales, you will perhaps choose a Sheraton sideboard, or a pair of Adam consoles, and quite possibly a dining-table in the style of Phyfe. If you choose Stuart or Elizabethan chairs, you will probably choose a bread-and-butter cupboard. Or if you choose old Colonial, you may choose a plate-cupboard or perhaps a milk-bench. If you choose painted furniture, it is usually best to vary its design somewhat—unless it be without ornament of any kind.

It is scarcely probable that I was the originator of the present vogue of painted furniture in dining-rooms; but it is true that the first painted dining-room furniture that I ever heard of was some mahogany of Sheraton design that I had painted emerald green. That furniture is now very somber, but then it was almost outrageous. I also had a decidedely unorthodox table made, for which I am now duly penitent. It was—and is—thirty-eight inches wide and six feet long. Its top is (most inconveniently) a solid piece of wood that neither pulls out nor shuts smaller. As its dimensions are at the moment not at all unusual, it might be well to list its faults: In the first place, it is too high (30½ inches from the floor), and the frame which holds the top comes within 1½ inches of the edge, and prevents its being cut lower without interfering with knee-room. But its greatest objection is that its length is unalterable. For two at table

the coziness of sitting six feet apart may be imagined, and for more than eight, end-tables must be added or a detachable top put on, making it still higher! As for sitting at it alone, the top of a moving-van would be just about as appealing! (This wrong-sized table is pictured in Plate 39.)

But in a room that is very narrow for its length, a long narrow table is obviously suitable. Moreover, tables that are from twenty-seven to thirty inches wide are rather attractive even for two or three or four persons to sit at, if they face each other across the center in a compact group, instead of using the distant ends (Figs. 127 and 128). But when a table is more than three feet wide it becomes clumsy,

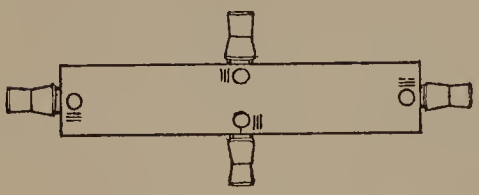


Fig. 127
SEATING TOO DISTANT

Fig. 128
VERY FRIENDLY

and sitting so as to face each other crossways is simply awkward. The little table shown in Plate 55 is perfect in shape and size for a family of two or three. Those who have used square or round tables have discovered that the regulation square or round covers do not fit them. Nor can refectory table-linen be used on any other table.

The refectory table shown in Plate 22 is about eight feet long and thirty inches wide, and is ideal to sit at facing a friend across it. The photograph cannot show the color of the room, which has a glowing quality of warmth that, combined with a substantial as well as hospitable personality, appeals to everyone—especially to a man.

WHY THE BREAKFAST-ROOM?

In a very big house, where the dining-room is used only for very big dinners, and the table for the family alone

looks like a peppermint in the center of an empty bureau-drawer, a smaller dining-room is perhaps essential—especially as waste space is of no importance in such a house. But in a little house——! Why should space which is more precious than anything else be so senselessly squandered? Why is not one room to eat in—indoors—enough? If the dining-room is dark, *why* is it dark, if there was space in the sun to build a breakfast-room? In other words, if the breakfast-room be pleasanter to eat in than the dining-room, then why not eat there always? Why must breakfast be eaten pleasantly, and lunch in gloom?

A summer dining-room is quite another thing. Who would not like to eat breakfast, lunch, and dinner on a screened porch jutting into a garden, on a beautiful summer day? In mild weather, an outdoor dining-room is perfection; then why not build the dining-room—if there be only one—like a sun-porch, with windows let down into the window-frame, after the manner of automobile windows, so that it can be entirely closed or entirely open? And, of course, if you like breakfast-loggias, breakfast-rooms or breakfast-nooks, there is no possible rule against them. Nor, for that matter, is there any rule against having seven dining-rooms and eating in a different one each day in the week! Why not? Some one might like the idea very much. A blue room for Blue Monday, a rose-colored one for Saturday, and so on. Again and again let us repeat that each person's house should be built and decorated and furnished precisely as each person likes best!

A PARTY-ROOM

If your house is big enough for a special party-room—or, perhaps best of all, if you can convert a barn into such a room—it might be amusing to decorate it rather riotously; that is, if your idea of a party in any way connotes riot of sound or rhythm of color. A perfect party-room in a barn might have walls hung with gay posters and tin lighting-fixtures, a circus-tent ceiling, a floor highly waxed and

covered with easily removable druggets; gay sofa-benches around the edges, plenty of chairs and tables, but no ornaments except cigarettes, match-boxes, and ash-trays. There is no excuse for lack of an enormous fireplace, since nothing is easier than building a chimney on the outside of a barn.

At one end of the party-room it would be useful to build a small stage for either professional or amateur actors or singers, or for musicians at a dance. At one side there would undoubtedly be a soda fountain, or a lunch counter, or whatever you wish to call it, and a shuffle-board, hop-scotch, or badminton court or plan of some other game painted on the floor. There might also be ping-pong tables decorated on their under sides and arranged to pull up against the tent-top when not in use. Or the decoration of a party-room that is part of the house might be entirely different: It might be in the modern theme of gray and black and steel and white. On the other hand, it might break every rule of color and outdiscord discord!

THE BEDROOMS

So many questions of individual preference enter into the plan and furnishing of your own bedroom that little is possible in the way of suggestions beyond those already made in an earlier chapter. The important thing is to divide the space as best suits your own ideas of comfort.

Considering a bedroom solely as a room that is set apart for sleep and rest, the most suitable wall might be a misty gray-green with ceiling a little lighter, a browny-green floor, green Venetian blinds to shut out the light from the windows as much or as little as you please. It should have a bed that is ideally comfortable, a *chaise longue* on which to rest by day. And that is all. Such a room should certainly suggest sleep and rest.

But the typical bedroom has many other requirements, according to the uses to which it is put. A dressing-table is rather essential, since it is an item of bedroom furnishing,

whether one use it or not. Clothes containers are necessary in the average room, but whether one chooses such bedroom objects as bureaus, chiffoniers, and bed-stands, or whether one prefers sitting-room furniture instead, is a matter of personal taste.

WHERE TO PLACE THE BED

The most important item in the furnishing of a bedroom is the placing of the bed. Some people like to sleep with their heads on the window-sills; most people—whether they like it or not—sleep with their feet to the light and their heads to the wall, because that is the way every architect and builder delights to place the beds. And, of course, if you do not like air blowing on you; if you do not care about going to sleep looking out at the sky, or at whatever your near-by window looks out on; if you get up the moment you wake and go downstairs for breakfast; if you are never ill—in other words, if the architect's pet position for the beds suits you perfectly well, no further thought on your part is necessary, because foot-to-the-window is exactly where the bed will be.

But if you have the European habit of taking your coffee in bed, you may as well prepare to read your mail and the morning paper with the light in your face and the page you are trying to see in total darkness—unless you arrange the wall lengths to suit yourself. If you have the American go-down-to-breakfast habit, you may think that light to read by in bed is of no interest to you at all; but if you ever are half-way ill, or recovering from an illness, the only thing you can do when you wish to read will be to shift your pillow and lie with your head at the foot of the bed. Otherwise, it means lying all day in a sliced-off piece of room, looking at the wall six feet away.

This, however, does not mean that there is a certain place which every one agrees on as being best for a bed. I am merely saying that you should consider all the possibilities that concern your own personal comfort.

That a bedroom sofa should have its head to the light is even more important than light to read by in bed, since many people rest on a sofa who never read by daylight in bed. And yet a *chaise longue,* as often as not, is placed with the head to the wall.

The diagram shown in Figure 129 is that of a room furnished by a foremost decorator. It is very attractive in color and in detail, but the placing of the furniture—if the room be that of a woman who is rather an invalid—could hardly be any worse. Figure 130 shows the same furniture rearranged. Now its light is not only comfortable to read by in bed,

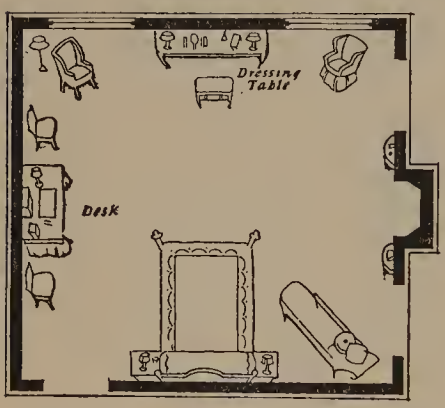


Fig. 129
BAD LIGHT

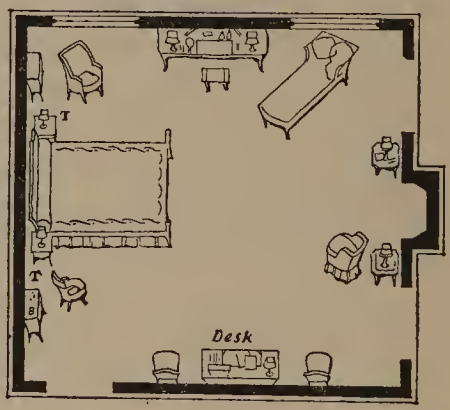


Fig. 130
GOOD LIGHT

but it is back of your head instead of shining in your face whether you read or rest on the sofa. In the rearrangement, the desk is not in a very good place, but as it is one that is rarely if ever used, the electric desk-light answers perfectly well. Were the desk really used, it would be practical to put a very small dressing-table in the window, with a picture-frame mirror on it that could be laid flat at night, and a writing-table at right angles to the other window; and the sofa could be put across the foot of the bed.

BEDROOM FURNITURE

The furniture may be strictly bedroom in character, or may not. In the simplest sort of little cottage, genuine bed-

room furniture is suitable and becoming; but in a room of importance, to install a large set consisting of twin beds, chiffonier, bureau, dressing-table, bed-tables, occasional tables and chairs, each piece in the precise style and color of every other, is pretty sure to spoil the chances of achieving a room of personality. If the furniture be unusually attractive, with not too many pieces, and if the walls and hangings and bed-trimmings be lovely and colorful, it may be possible to digest the overdose of monotony—but it is far from likely.

If you have only moderate closet space and it is necessary to include the entire bedroom furniture list, then at least let the different items be somewhat varied. For instance, in the cottage bedroom shown in Plate 49 the furniture was all chosen separately and then painted to agree but not to match. The beds are pale spring-leaf green, with a deer and fawn standing under trees of darker green; the top drawer of a chiffonier has a similar decoration, but in a lower and longer design. The bureau in the picture is painted light greenish yellow, with a silhouette landscape in green—about the color of the green furniture—on the top of it; in front of the setback, two armchairs are green with a small scene painted on the splat; two side-chairs are yellow with a very slender green vine around the splat; the desk is plain green with no trimming whatsoever. Two tables are green, one plain, the other with a small forest vista that is more yellow than green. In other words, although the designs repeat the same hues of green and yellow, the individual pieces are greatly varied both in design and value, and although one might perhaps call the furniture a "set" since it was obviously painted to go together, the room gives no impression of monotony. The contradictory requirements of unity and variety are fairly well illustrated in this particular room.

In a bedroom—either large or small—where there are not many pieces of furniture, a bed, chest, table, and two chairs that are alike, look very well. But even so, interest is greatly increased by changing outlines somewhat, or adding or taking

away details of ornament. In a room that has five pieces of painted furniture, it is safe to decorate one piece rather elaborately and another slightly, and leave the rest plain except for a slight accenting of the paneling.

A pet method of my own is to have one drawer of a chest or bureau or desk decorated, or possibly to use a design that is painted across the space of two drawers, but rarely to spot the front of a piece of furniture with repeated design. By varying the amount of decoration, by reversing the color, even by adding supplementary color here and there, and by slightly changing the values, you give the whole room interest and beauty.

In Plate 10, the desk in the corner, which is of lemon-yellow with maple interior, has across the lowest drawer a scenic design in yellow-green and brown. The rest of the furniture in this room is of maple—some of it antique, some of it new. The chintz is flame-color with dogwood flowers in white and lemon. The organdie bed-hangings are flame-color. The mirror candlesticks and shades are orange-red lacquer, the toilet articles are amber. The floor is maple, the rug sand-color, and the wall-paper a tiny light red design on an ivory-white ground.

For nearly every type of room it is well to remember that variety—*which really means interest*—can be provided with a little thought. We all know that color will do most to make a room attractive, but that interest, plus attractiveness, plus comfort, can alone produce the sort of perfection which the helpless look at in bewilderment and say: "I don't know *how* you do it!" And yet to provide these three sample requirements is the whole secret.

If the furniture of a room be of unpainted wood, there is no possible excuse for monotony, since pieces that are in accord without being replicas are easy enough to find. Rosewood and mahogany; maple, birch, and fruit woods; walnut, butternut and dark oak; even painted pieces and wood pieces —all go together perfectly, if one but pay attention to texture and to scale.

Mrs. Reginald Peirce, Decorator

TO LOOK OUT AT THE STARS AS YOU GO TO SLEEP—COULD ANYTHING BE MORE ENCHANTING?

(A radiator is under the dressing table)

[PLATE 40]

H. T. Lindeberg, Architect

A BEDROOM OF COMFORT IN A HOUSE OF DISTINCTION AND BEAUTY

[PLATE 41]

WHAT IS MEANT BY COMFORT

You naturally know what you need for your own comfort better than anyone can possibly suggest. And yet habit is so strong that many of us unthinkingly accept discomforts that we are used to, such as inconveniently placed furniture and electric-light tortures, without stopping to consider whether they might not be quite easily changed.

Therefore, to come back to the subject of placing the bed, which we started this section with, and then wandered away from—let us repeat the advice to be sure to place your bed where you *like* to have it.

A bedroom that is my personal idea of a fairy-tale come true is illustrated in Plate 40; and yet to countless others the position of the beds may have no allure at all. To one who is afraid of sleeping in a current of air, or to one who has never through illness realized the dullness of the average bed's view, or to one who does not like to go to sleep looking out at the stars, or to one who would evade the bright eye of the early morning sun, such closeness to the windows may not appeal. In that case nothing is easier than furnishing a bedroom precisely as the millions upon millions of other bedrooms are furnished!

Such bed-in-the-window arrangement is not entirely new—one is even illustrated in Plate 45—but the beauty with which it is done is outstanding. Usually such a window-seat bed is chosen for a single room, since few rooms have windows on opposite sides, and at right angles the beds do not balance so well. Moreover, were the dressing-table windows in the illustration missing, half of the charm and comfort of the room would be lost. Such arrangement is, of course, impossible for a double bed, since the bed could not be made up, and its alcove would be too deep.

A sleeping-porch room with nothing in it but the beds, two chairs, and two night-tables, and then a dressing-room and bath for the wife and a dressing-room-bath for the husband, is an arrangement that has already been suggested.

GUEST-ROOMS, SPARE ROOMS, THE CONVERTIBLE SITTING-ROOM

Guest-room is the word that one writes in a book such as this, but spare room is the term that one uses when speaking. Thus the two may mean the same thing. But for the purpose of making a distinction between them, let us say that a guest-room should be rather formally exacting, and that spare rooms should merely be as comfortable and as inviting as the capacity of an average house and the possibilities of average taste can make them.

The convertible sitting-room is of especial use in the small house that has very occasional overnight visitors. It will therefore be fully considered in Chapter XX.

The best guest-room arrangement for a man and wife in a house of importance provides two rooms alike in size —one with a wide double bed, the other with twin beds, and each room with a bath of its own. This arrangement allows the guests to sleep where and as they select. In a house of great luxury a sitting-room is also included. The sitting-room is not necessary, but two rooms and one bath, or at least a room, a bath, and a dressing-room, are the minimum requirement of an important house.

This does not mean that those who live simply cannot ask whoever they please to stay with them, but merely that if a house makes great pretense of luxury because of its style and its size, its guest-rooms must naturally be in keeping.

THE GUEST-ROOM OF PERFECTION

The house we love to stay in is not necessarily one of greatest importance—not by any means. But certain comforts it must have, unless we are numbered among the rare few who care nothing—or perhaps know nothing—about the details of comfort which those who are fastidious find it hard to do without.

At all events, it makes not the least difference in the world

whether the interior decoration of a spare room be elaborate and its furniture of fabulous value, or whether its walls be whitewashed and the entire contents of the room have no intrinsic value at all. But there is one requirement that cannot be overlooked, and that is its comfort, its convenience, judged by the standards of its occupants.

This brings us back to the constantly repeated question: How do you live? How do your friends live? The importance or simplicity of your house may mean much or nothing. People who live beautifully live just as beautifully whether their surroundings are those of the simplest farmhouse or those of a palace. On the other hand, people who have no knowledge of the appointments of a beautifully run house live just as badly in a palace as in a shack. The difference is merely that in a shack perfect appointments are not expected, while in a palace their absence is inexcusable.

The essential requirements of comfort for every guest-room of perfection, whether it be in a palace or in a little but well appointed house, include:

1. A bathroom of its own.
2. A delightful bed.
3. Plenty of light and air.
4. Choice of pillows.
5. A perfect dressing-table.
6. A good light to read by in bed.
7. Heat in cold weather.
8. Cross-ventilation in hot weather.
9. A sofa to rest on.
10. Situation as free from noise as possible.

In a house of perfect appointment, there must be a bathroom that belongs to and adjoins each bedroom, or that is at least situated between two bedrooms and shared by a husband and wife, or members of a family. If you have to go out into the hall to your bathroom you might as well go any distance. Stationary wash-stands, by the way, belong only in the servants' wing, where a bath for each room is not possible; or in a small hotel or boarding-house which

is not equipped with a bath for each room. But in a house of quality, "running hot and cold water" in a master's bedroom is as unthinkable as a laundry tub!

If for some reason of your own you *must* install a washstand in a bedroom, then set it into the paneling of the wall (like the dressing-table in Plate 31). For that matter, any or all bathroom fixtures could be set behind paneling. But, except in an apartment where additional space is impossible, to build on a small bathroom would be a great deal better—and cheaper.

Equally important is a restful and well-equipped bed. No matter how unpretentious a house may be, no visitor should be invited to spend the night on a thin, hard, or lumpy mattress, nor on springs that sag like a hammock and are fit only for one who has had training as a sailor. The only bed that can with truth be described as good, is one that has a thick mattress of spongy consistency—either reasonably new or newly made over—on coil springs. In a primitive house, the springs can perfectly well be open instead of boxed-in with ticking.* Hammock springs can be made fairly flat by putting an apple-dumpling folded comforter or at worst from one to three pillows between two mattresses, to take up the slack.

THE EQUIPMENT OF A GOOD BED

In cold weather and for those who like a soft bed, an old silk-covered wool-filled quilt is more comfortable than the usual cotton-mattress cover. The under sheet should be at the very least two feet bigger on all four sides than the mattress, so that it will stay smooth and tucked in. If your sheets are somewhat short, add a strip of sheeting (or muslin will do perfectly) across the bottom, so that the sheets need go no further down than the bottom edge of the mattress, with the muslin used as a tuck-under. If sheets are narrow

* Open springs are especially suitable in houses at the seashore, where unpainted iron crumbles with rust. Open coil springs are easily repainted where the paint chips off. Those under ticking give no warning of their disintegration until they rust through!

as well as short, sew muslin at the sides and keep these sheets for under ones. There is really no excuse for a bed that cannot be properly made. Long sheets are especially necessary for a tall man. Not one man in a thousand knows the difference between linen and cotton sheets, but every man is made miserable by bed-covers that are not long enough to tuck thoroughly down.

Blankets should, of course, be warm and light in weight. A wool-filled quilt folded over the foot of the bed is better than one filled with eider-down (which is too hot for most climates), unless the eider-down quilt is especially long and used in place of blankets, with a thin quilt or blanket as an extra.

An item that most hostesses forget is that for every single bed there must be two pillows, one of ticking or coutille, well stuffed with feathers, and another of very soft sateen filled with down, so that one may sleep on the sort of pillow one is used to.

SHEETS OF SILK, LINEN OR COTTON

It is far from necessary to provide silk sheets. It is not even necessary, in an unpretentious house, to have linen. In fact, fine cotton sheets, though usually with linen pillow-cases, are preferred by many. But remember there is cotton and cotton. One very well-known New England mill makes cotton of a texture that is glass-smooth, handkerchief-soft, and ideal for those few who do not like the coldness of linen. In the ultra-modern house, silk sheets and pillow-cases to match the room are not unusual. If you like silk, therefore, flat silk is best. But if it is crêpe-de-Chine, be sure that it is not inclined to be pebbly and rough. After all, if you choose to sleep on silk you are apt to expect it to be smooth.

Those of us who prefer linen to silk, but who are attracted by color, can easily have as much linen as we choose, dyed. Pink, apricot, and peach dye beautifully. Blue and

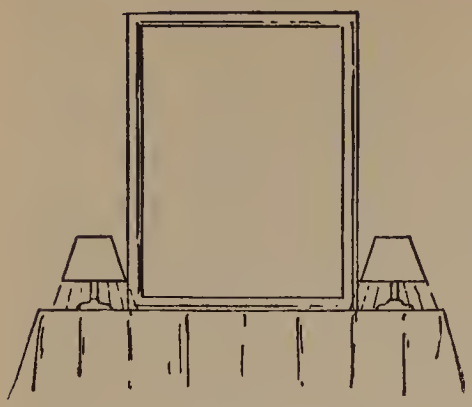


Fig. 131
IMPOSSIBLE

green are not apt to turn out so well; but neither are we likely to choose blue or green for bed-furnishing. Whatever bed-coverings we choose let them be smooth and fine. Cotton blankets as heavy and as hard as a layer of books, with fuzzy cotton sheets, do not make a bed that one delights to sleep in.

A COMFORTABLE DRESSING-TABLE

A dressing-table of comfort means one that has a good light by day and by night. The best possible light by day is one that is set directly in a window. Plate 40 illustrates a lovely dressing-table perfectly placed. The one shown in Plate 10 is very simple, but very practical. Any two small tables with a few drawers in them can be set at a convenient distance apart and be covered with a glass top. The top is a plain piece of fairly thick glass the size of the tables and the space between.

But at night, lamps or candles standing on the dressing-table are of no use whatever! A bright light on your combs and brushes and whatever else is laid out on top of the dressing-table is little compensation for a head that is in total darkness. (Fig. 131.)

Even the lights in Figure 132, which are quite high, are impossible to see by. High lights would be fairly

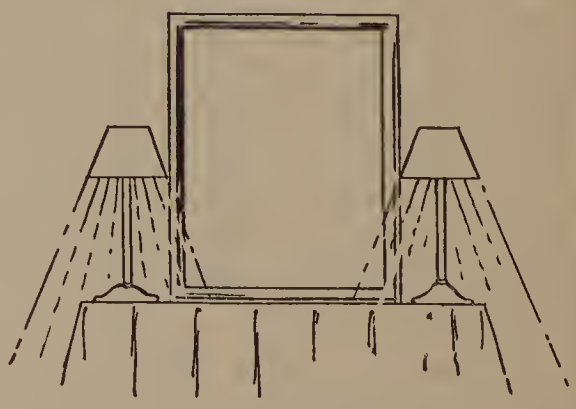


Fig. 132
STILL BAD

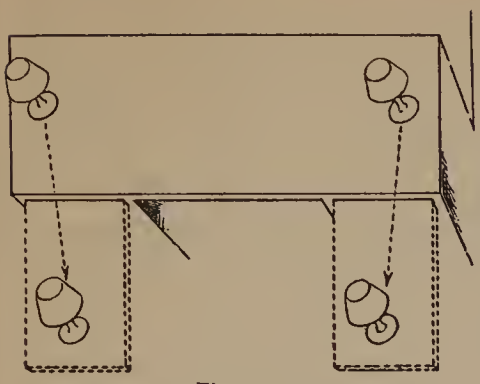


Fig. 133
POSSIBLE WITH SLIDES TO STAND TALL LAMPS ON

good if made so that they could be brought forward on slides which would bring them on a line with your shoulders, as indicated in Figure 133; but they must stand as high as your head and have tip-shades to form reflectors on both sides. The only dressing-table light that is genuinely serviceable is a drop-light that hangs directly over the chair on which you sit at table, with a wide drum or umbrella shade. A good bright light can be hung high enough to be well above your head when you stand. (Fig. 134.)

In a bedroom of my own there is a dressing-table five feet wide by only fourteen inches deep. (I have been cutting thinner nearly all the furniture I own.) It has a mirror-top, a full-sized mantel-mirror back of it, and two very tall lamps with three-sided shades—meaning that one side is left open. I thought that I had evolved a very bright idea, and that by turning the shades around and directing the light as I pleased, they would be perfect. But they are no better than any other failures. They either shine in my eyes or devote their illumination to the combs and brushes!

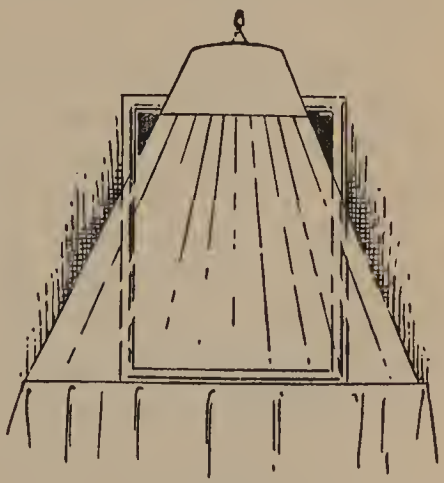


Fig. 134
PERFECT

OTHER REQUIREMENTS OF A GUEST-ROOM

Do not clutter the dressing-table of your guest-room with an array of brushes and combs and manicure sets

which take all the space that the visitor needs for her own things. A whisk-broom or clothes-brush is sometimes useful, as is also a pincushion with assorted safety-pins, as well as a small work-box with needles and threads, scissors, and thimbles of two sizes. The average thimble, about No. 10, is utterly unusable by one who has thin fingers. One No. 9 and one No. 7 would provide the proper size for almost anyone—if flower-pot rather than cuff-shaped.

An outstanding requirement of a spare room is a good light at the head of the bed. Let some member of the family —one who has a habit of reading in bed—try the guest-room bed-lights and report on them. The little squat lamp with screwed-on snuffing shade and a 25-watt bulb is only too well known to all of us who at one time or another have tried sitting propped up in bed, with book in one hand and light held over it in the other! Comfortable? What do you think?

On the writing-table should be a blotter, fresh ink, variously assorted pens, a sharpened pencil, and a scratch-pad, as well as good house-stamped paper and envelops. There should be a few stamps, a pair of paper-scissors, and a small bottle of mucilage.

A sofa should have a few good pillows (instead of dozens of pincushion samples) and a quilt folded across the end of it.

Venetian blinds are the very best shades, since they shut out as much light as you choose, and let in air. But they must be fitted properly into grooves on either side of the window-casing, or they rattle and slap all night through.

If the windows are loose, have thin wedges made and attach these with cords to the window-casings, so that they can be easily pushed in beside a rattling window sash. Also have the shutter fastenings kept in repair.

An eye-bandage is an indispensable item for one who sleeps with every window opened wide. They sell them at the sporting-goods stores, but a four-inch cuff-shaped bandage of smooth dark silk, with two pleats at the top to keep

it from sliding over the face, cannot be too highly recommended to those who would have air without light.

The books for a spare room might include one or two best-sellers, a go-to-sleep book of essays on topics that are not too absorbing, a book of short stories—perhaps one of the yearly collections—and half a dozen magazines of greatest diversity. But there is not much use in putting books in your spare room if there is no light by which to read or even to guess at the subjects of the pictures!

FURNITURE TO SUIT EACH VISITOR

In all hotels there are furniture-storage rooms from which suitable pieces are taken for the comfort of certain guests, and to which other pieces are returned. A private house might very successfully do the same.

A dressing-table in the center of the biggest window in the room will meet the approval of every woman who takes any interest in her looks. But it is a blockading nuisance to a man. Plenty of space in front of the windows will be much more acceptable to him.

A tall man is made utterly wretched in a short single bed. Remember, therefore, that if you have two spare rooms —one with a double bed and one with a single bed—and two men visitors, it is not a question of giving an older man the better room but of giving the taller one the double bed.

IF YOU WOULD HAVE A ROOM IN BEST TASTE

Do not throw cushions about on the floor. And do not pile your bed with an unrestrained assortment of pillows on top of the bedspread. Remember that suitability and sincerity are the fundamentals of good taste, and good taste scarcely recommends—except on a beach or in a beach cabin —that people of distinction lie around on cushions on the floor. Therefore, if not to lie upon on the floor—why cushions? Soft, squashy ones are of little use as footstools. Neither

is it good for the counterpane to lie down on top of it, which is what a collection of pillows invites you to do. One or two pillows of unusual beauty might be considered decorative, but dozens of overtrimmed and thoroughly uninteresting as well as useless baby pillows—decked in lace and ribbons—belong with the doll-petticoated telephone and all the other footless baby-talk trimmings that proclaim arrested development of taste.

THE DESTRUCTIVE DRESSING-STAND GESTURE

The following is not a bit important, but it might as well be included as a warning to guests. On every Colonial bureau in the average guest-room is a little Sheraton, Hepplewhite, or Cottage Colonial dressing-stand, with a drawer in it. In front of this there is plenty of bureau ledge, on which, many a time and oft, most of us have stood a clock or a bottle of perfume or other object, and then pulled the drawer out and sent clock or bottle crashing! Why do we? And why will we continue to put the clock out of order and spill our best perfume on the carpet, which probably turns yellow? Who knows?

BATHROOMS

A short while ago a magazine article by a well-known writer on interior decoration urged that one bathroom in a house with four or five master's bedrooms is quite enough, if it be of large size. Which was very much like declaring that one sponge for the use of the family is all that is necessary if the sponge be a big one!

The one essential of comfort in a bathroom is that we may each have one to ourselves. Size and decoration are very secondary requirements. A most comfortable and pretty bathroom can be put into a space that is five feet by six—even five feet square is possible. A bathroom for the nursery, in which a baby must be bathed and children dressed—and which must, moreover, have room for the endless parapher-

nalia that seem necessary for small children—should, if possible, be bigger; but five feet six by seven feet six is ample for anyone or for anything. Comfort and attractiveness depend, of course, upon how the fixtures are placed.

The bathroom with the tub across its width, leaving a square space, makes an infinitely more attractive room than the ugly and space-wasting setting of the tub longways.

The most unattractive bathroom possible to think of is one with a slit of a window, and with the tub and fixtures in a row, leaving a bowling-alley passage along the wall. A bathroom that is square in effect—with a full-sized window—is almost inevitably attractive. If there must be a needle-bath or other varieties of fixtures, size is naturally essential. And if you like a six-foot tub, then the least width possible for the room is six feet six inches. But there are many of us who prefer a five-foot tub, unless there can be one big enough to swim in—which is something else again! In a country cottage, where the force of water is not overstrong, the smallest tub that you find comfortable is the best, because it fills most quickly.

In a luxurious type of house, tubs are necessarily larger and of better quality than those in an unpretentious cottage. In the former, width of tub produces a greater effect of luxury than length of tub. A large tub should be double walled and either faced in one piece with its interior or else set in place with tiles.

In a little house, however, the cheapest tub that comes—the ordinary one that sits up on feet—is a thousand times to be preferred to those which imitate the better styles, but, being only half sealed in, are veritable dirt-pockets. The ordinary tub can be cleaned on every side with ease, and the floor wiped below, while the semi-set-in tub, which is sealed around the rim with an opening between the wall and the back, might be cleaned by a trained python, but by nothing else that I have been able to think of.

The size of the wash-basin depends, of course, upon the space available. Let us hope that you need not put up with

the discomfort of a little basin with a chain that pulls the stopper out prematurely unless you are very careful; that is so narrow that you bump your forehead if you wash your face with water held in your cupped hands, and that has no rim on which to stand anything.

A stopper and chain—a chain that looks like strung beads—is, on the other hand, the best bathtub outlet so far devised. The thought of a plunger is not very likely to appeal to you if you have often noticed the return of soap from previous baths—especially in hotels. There may be plenty of tight plungers, and perhaps this is a personal antipathy; but it is a suggestion that might bear investigation—unless you don't mind yesterday's soap in to-day's bath.

Personally, also, I cannot endure the mustache-cup effect of the anti-splash hand-basin which the plumbers are at the moment most likely to install if you do not watch out. Of course, if you like this contrivance, then it is quite all right. In a bathroom that is big enough, a hand-basin slab three feet wide makes all the difference in the world—to me. In fact, my personal bathroom recipe might be: A short broad tub, and a big basin set in a wide fixture; a shower over the tub, a square floor-space, big medicine-closet, mirrors for decoration; a big window (this should be underscored), a slipper chair, bathroom scales, and a velvet carpet covering the whole floor when the tiles are not pretty ones. There must be attractive color, plenty of towels, and plenty of heat in cold weather. This recipe is given merely so that you can accept or reject as much of it as you happen to choose.

Colored plumbing fixtures are utterly fascinating. I would like very much indeed to rip all white ones out and burst into color throughout. Who amongst us would not? But colored plumbing in a bathroom set with colored tiles loses all attraction, unless by miracle of chance the plumbing and the tiles go better together than those which I have happened to see.

In one room Spanish tiles of turquoise blue made a beau-

tiful background for black-and-white marble fixtures; but tiles and fixtures of supposedly matching colors should usually—one or the other of them—be indicted for esthetic murder. There are endless other backgrounds, however, against which colored fixtures are irresistible.

Walls set with engraved mirrors are beautiful; and so are walls that are made entirely of glass mirrors on the backs of which an artist has painted decorative designs before the quicksilver was put on. And both, I may add, are fabulously expensive.

Lacquered silver makes a lovely background for almost all colored plumbing, either light or dark, and is not necessarily expensive. The plaster and all the woodwork is silver-painted and then shellacked. In an elaborate house the floor would be of marble or dark glass or covered with a black velvet carpet.

BEAUTY AT LITTLE EXPENSE

For a simple house, nothing is prettier than trim and dado painted with enamel paint either a little lighter than the plumbing or of a contrasting shade, and papered above either with silver tea-paper or with a wall-paper that accentuates the color of the plumbing. In an inexpensive cottage there is nothing better for the floor than a black-and-white linoleum. Be sure to pick a color that is pure black-and-white and that has not a yellow cast—unless you deliberately choose yellow to go with your color. You can, of course, have plain linoleum cut into whatever geometrical pattern you choose, and set like a mosaic in little pieces.

If you choose a marble floor for the bathrooms or anywhere else, be sure that the black will polish jet-black and that the white is a clean white. Beware of the dirty-colored marble with a dull surface that is often used for the very small blocks habitually set in bathroom floors. You can have it cleaned hour after hour, day after day, forever, and it will never look anything but dull and dirty. (It is this sort of a floor that I always cover with a black velvet carpet.)

BATH-DRESSING-ROOMS

The bath-dressing-rooms that one sees advertised are in a few instances beautiful; but many of them suggest perfume-makers' display-rooms, or beauty-parlors, or almost anything rather than the bathroom-dressing-room of a woman of distinction. Such rooms are far from appealing to the woman who really knows much about luxury.

A bathroom, whether it be also a dressing-room or not, is necessarily a room of utility into which you go to bathe, to brush your teeth, and so on. If there is one place in which you are not likely to want to stay, it is in a room that is misty with steam from a hot bath. A sofa in a dressing-room is another matter; but in this case the plumbing fixtures belong elsewhere.

In fact, speaking from very personal experience, a combination dressing-room-bathroom has many disadvantages that you would do well to consider before building one. If you have a personal maid, where would she be—and stay? And where would you go for privacy? You could say, "Celeste, go out!" and call "Celeste, come back!" But sending her in and out is scarcely a situation of luxurious convenience. Or, on the other hand, if you get out of your clothes and put them on by yourself, the almost dramatic luxury of the background does not very well fit the wait-on-yourself dramatic action. In either case an inconveniently large bathroom-dressing-room with nowhere to go but up and down the different floor levels, and with not a door to close, may do very well in a picture, but does very uncomfortably in fact.

But for those who like bath-dressing-rooms, the plan shown in Figure 135 is fairly good. The recessed bath is curtained twice. It has an inside shower curtain hung close to the tub, and outside curtains hung so as to make a small bath compartment. The cupboards over the tub are space-saving in a small house. A hand-basin might be in the recess at left of bath, if shelf closet could be spared.

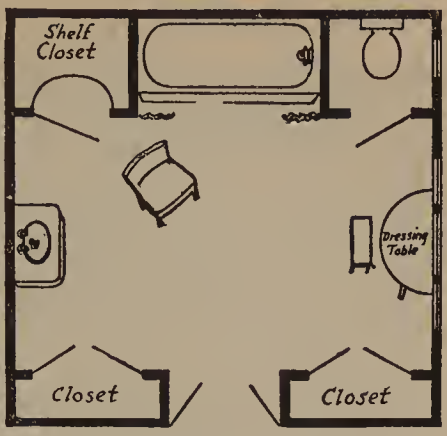


Fig. 135
PLAN FOR BATH-DRESSING-ROOM

My own idea of dressing convenience includes a bathroom that may be very large, or that may be so small that you can just about get into it and shut the door. Its size is no matter at all. But its door is essential. If you can't be alone in your bathroom, where can you? And again, what is your idea of luxury? A moving-picture scene in which four or five attendants help the heroine take her bath, is undoubtedly supposed to suggest luxury. Perhaps it does. Perhaps we might as well leave it at that.

THE SERVICE END OF THE HOUSE

Each housekeeper knows how *she* runs her house, how she chooses to live, and how much her mode of living exacts in luxury, convenience or space. The question of taste is affected only in this: There must be agreement between the character of the house and the manner of its upkeep.

To live beautifully in the most unpretentious little house in the world is in very best taste—if "beautifully" includes no suggestion of pretentious scale. It is difficult to fit numerous men servants into a primitive cottage in a simple environment, because primitive simplicity and numerous men servants are out of harmony. Men servants can perfectly well be fitted into the littlest house of a bachelor, and a dignified butler is quite adjustable to a simple little house. But a footman beside a chauffeur on a country motor-car is as unsuitable as evening clothes worn down-town to business—unless the occupant of the car is an invalid who has to be lifted by two men. Even so it would be in rather better taste were the footman in plain clothes, like the nurse or valet whose services he performs.

In even worse taste, on the other hand, is the house of size and apparent magnificence in which the occupants haven't the most elemental conception of proper equipment. Within a certain distance of New York there is a certain new house of arresting magnificence. It contains a gallery, a loggia, a drawing-room, a den, a living-room, a dining-room, a breakfast-room, a billiard-room, a library, as well as half a dozen master's bedrooms. And then—room for two servants!

Of course, there is no reason in the world why a family should not live in a big house and at the same time do much —or even all—of its own housework if it is able and willing. But the house must not suggest an important English country seat or a French château, or any style that can be called pretentious. With perfect propriety it may suggest a farm-house, a ranch-house or any type of house that lends itself to primitive simplicity of living.

THE KITCHEN

Taking an average well-run house, let us put at the top of the list of the service department, a light and convenient kitchen. Its size depends entirely upon the family's manner of living. In a house that has few, if any, big dinners or other entertainments requiring much kitchen and pantry space, a small kitchen with plenty of light and air is more convenient than a big one. The word "small" is, of course, relative. For a cook alone, a kitchen ten feet by twelve is much better than one that is too large. If you have a kitchen-maid, the kitchen must be somewhat larger than for a cook alone. A kitchen sixteen feet by sixteen is almost too big for a cook alone—unless it is so arranged that she need seldom leave the working corner of it.

The arrangement of a kitchen is important, since unnecessary steps waste not only time but energy as well. The sink, dresser or supply closet, range, and zinc-topped table should be as close together as possible, and in a good light

A PLEASANT AND AIRY KITCHEN IS AN ESSENTIAL OF EVERY COMFORTABLE HOUSE

[PLATE 42]

A MAID'S ROOM THAT IS BOTH PRETTY AND COMFORTABLE

[PLATE 43]

both by day and by night. The only disadvantages of a small kitchen in which the servants do not eat—are heat, and lack of space when preparing for a big party.

Every kitchen must, however, have proper equipment, including a good range and a clean and adequate icebox. Whether the icebox be electric or filled by the iceman is of little moment; its white-lined cleanness is of chief concern. Another thing to remember in a kitchen is a sink big enough to hold a life-sized dishpan. The tendency of the builders of average houses is to put a uselessly small sink both in the kitchen and in the pantry.

Kitchen decoration is at the moment rivaled in glory only by that of the bathroom-dressing-room. If you like a kitchen painted every color of the rainbow, the paint-box is open for you to choose what you will, and in the shops are utensils and floor-coverings to match or contrast with whichever colors you may fancy.

An ugly, dingy back of the house is really inexcusable, since very little thought and even less expense can change it into beauty. The difference between the old kitchen in Plate 8 and the kitchen in Plate 42 is produced by white paint, a new sink, and oilcloth. Paint alone would have made the old kitchen attractive to look at. The floor would have been quite as pretty brightly painted blue and waxed.

THE SERVANTS' HALL

In a house of importance there is usually a combination sitting-room-dining-room or both a sitting-room and a dining-room. In an average house there is perhaps a small room furnished with a table and the necessary number of chairs; or possibly there is an alcove fitted with a long table between wall-benches—commercially called a breakfast nook.

The size of the servants' hall naturally depends upon the number of servants. In the age of brown utility it was apt to be rather drab and dreary. Now its walls are usually painted with washable paint, or it is papered with a colorful

paper and then shellacked; its furniture is either varnished or painted, and the effect is attractive and homelike. One maid alone naturally eats in the kitchen.

THE PANTRY

The size of the pantry should, like that of the kitchen, be in proportion to the family's mode of life. In an average small house a pantry five feet by seven—or even six—is entirely adequate. (See Fig. 46, page 98, and Fig. 48, page 100.)

The pantry in a house of size, in which many parties are given, must obviously be larger in proportion. A slide between the kitchen and the pantry has one objection: It encourages the smell of cooking to come through into the pantry and thence into the dining-room. The difficulty of keeping the smell of cooking out of the front part of the house is too well known to most of us to need comment further than that every range should have a hood over it, and that there should be two doors between the kitchen and dining-room; indeed, a third door between pantry and dining-room is not too many. The kitchen that opens directly into the dining-room or into the front hall is a detail that every house plan should avoid.

FOR PASTING, SORTING AND PACKAGE-WRAPPING

An item of great convenience, in the back entry, or flower room, or shed, or coat closet, or wherever space for it can be found, is a drop-shelf table, about two feet six inches by five feet six inches, with plain wood or wood covered with oilcloth (cemented or closely thumb-tacked around the vertical edge), for pasting, writing, sorting, or package-wrapping. A large, unencumbered table of this kind, instantly available when needed, is unendingly useful.

On the wall at one side, if possible (otherwise somewhere near), one or two commercial wrapping-paper rollers should be installed. You can buy them of any stationery supply

company. A small one and a big one may be necessary, if you send many packages; otherwise a big one will do, of medium weight but strong manila paper. Narrow shelves above the drop-table are essential. On the lowest one, fasten three or four small perpendicular iron rods by setting them into holes made with a small gimlet through the shelf. On these put three or four balls of different weight twine.

Divide the rest of the shelf spaces into compartments for various tags and rubber stamps and labels—one with your name and address, and any addresses to which boxes or hampers are habitually sent. Also have labeled spaces for mucilage, glue, stamps, scales, clips, rubber bands, and so on.

Fasten the shears and scissors by slender chains or strong string, so that they cannot be taken away by the absent-minded or the careless.

Empty boxes, and especially big sheets of wrapping-paper, quires of tissue paper, and so on, can perhaps be kept in a cupboard or on a high shelf.

At all events, well arranged equipment for sending off packages is essential to the convenience of every house.

THE REQUIREMENTS OF WELL-APPOINTED SERVANTS' ROOMS

A room can be the minimum in size, so minimum that only by the greatest skill can the bed, bureau, table, and a chair or two be fitted into it. In the plan shown in Figure 46 the room marked "2" is the smallest maid's room possible to furnish. It is so small that in order to fit the bed and bureau in, the side-bars of the bed had to be shortened. And yet no one could ask for a prettier or more comfortable room, now that the furniture is packed into it. It has two windows and a good-sized closet. The wall-paper has a white glazed ground, with sprays of flowers in lovely colors. The furniture, the simplest possible to buy, is painted light leaf-green. The floor is painted green, and the clearflax rugs also are green. There are crossed-over dotted Swiss curtains. A dolphin glass lamp with a parchment shade stands on a table.

There is a wall-light at the head of the bed, and an unbleached muslin candlewick spread.

Maid's room No. 1 on the same plan and in Plate 43 is occupied by a personal maid. The floor and rugs are the same as in Room 2. The furniture is painted corn-yellow with narrow black lines, and the paper has small bouquets of flowers on a white ground with tiny blank dots. This room also has a candlewick spread. The settle has a plain pine top which, when not in use, is turned toward the wall. When it is in use it is an excellently strong table to stand the sewing-machine on, or to cut or to press on. The other rooms, 3 and 4, have a pink-flowered paper, light-blue painted furniture, and the trim painted blue to match the furniture.

This description is given because, no matter whom they might be furnished for, simple cottage rooms could not be prettier; nor, on the other hand, could they have been much less expensive. The entire difference between these rooms and others of complete hideosity is color. And color is one thing, at all events, that costs no more when lovely than when villainous. The only detail that anyone could list as extravagant are the bed-springs, mattresses, and wall-papers.

As said elsewhere, cheap wall-papers are bad economy. In this day of easily applied, unstreakable paints, all rooms of mud-and-mustard ugliness are indefensible—unless one have not the price of a brush and a can or two of paint.

The day of serviceable color—meaning one that does not show dirt—is past. To-day light colors that show dirt very much are chosen by all good housekeepers for that very reason. Serviceable color, moreover, is not really practical from the standpoint of a good housekeeper, because there is no incentive for any human being to take an interest in dinginess that is just as dirty-looking after being scrubbed as it was before.

But a room of beautiful color, with the beautifying accessories of pretty curtains, a pretty lamp and shade, a pretty bedspread, a neutral rug, and ordinary attention to normal

requirements of comfort, has long proved—to my own satisfaction, at all events—that those who show their indifference to beauty by failing to keep it as beautiful as they can, are in the uncountably small minority. Most of us now realize that a house which is attractive only in the front part of it can scarcely be classed as one to which the word "perfect" may, more than half-way, be applied.

XVII

FOR THE CHILDREN OF THE HOUSE

IN this present day of interest in child psychology, there are few who fail to realize that children, instead of being unknowing, uncaring little animals, needing merely to be housed, clothed, and fed, are supersensitive to beauty in its almost every phase.

To a grown person, beauty of surroundings may be a necessity or it may be of no consequence at all. In other words, the need for beauty may be compensated for by something that has gradually taken its place. But for every child, light, and air, and color are factors of vital importance to its happiness, as well as to its normal growth.

That children cannot judge between excellence and abomination in esthetic taste is quite true, but they are easily affected by their surroundings as measured by degrees of light or darkness, freedom or restraint: light produced by bright pleasing color and the responsive cheerfulness of the grown person who takes care of them; darkness produced by ugliness, the gloom of a cross or moody person, or the hampering restrictions of ceaseless "Don'ts."

A child must have freedom as well as beauty, or else the price of beauty is too great. Things can be so high-priced that our pleasure in them is spoiled. We all know that! We know, too, if we stop to think about it, that the price of continuous "don'ts" is the highest price a child can be asked to pay.

The first requirement, therefore, for the contentment of a child is a space somewhere—no matter whether it be big or small—where he can be free to do what he pleases; where he can make just about as much of a mess as he wants to; and where the word "don't" is never heard.

To children who live in the country—or in the suburbs—outdoors means liberty, even though liberty be enclosed in a small front or back yard. In a big city, "going out" means —for the small child—walking on the street, held by the hand; or at most, roller-skating up and down the block under the constant surveillance of a nurse, or governess, until almost grown. In the city, therefore, an indoor play-room of pleasing and practicable appeal is of greatest importance.

From the mud-and-mustard wall-paper, and the old banged odd-lot yellow-brown furniture that provided the playroom furnishing of long ago, to the last room created for the children of fortune by specialists in child's-room decoration, is a far cry! Some of the new designs devised for children are interesting, and a few are very beautiful; it must be added, however, that many others are disturbingly distorted, and that, as incentives to the love of beauty, their value is difficult to perceive. A small room with a life-sized animal completely filling each wall space; furniture of grotesque outline; no single foothold anywhere that is not crowded with toy favors like the counter of a confectioner's —such a room is very like an overcrowded flower-bed in which you expect a little plant to thrive and grow. Light, air, and uncrowded space are needed for a child as well as for a plant.

The ugliness of the drab and dingy room noted above is one extreme; the other extreme is the hampering spoil-ability of the too-fine turquoise, shell-pink, or peach-colored taffeta upholstery in the sleeping-room-play-room of the child who is housed like a doll, dressed like a doll, and supposed never to behave otherwise than as a doll. Of the two extremes, the former is far to be preferred, as it does at least tend to make character and quite possibly promote the ingenuity of a child.

This sounds like a flat contradiction of the first paragraph in the present chapter. But what is meant is that a child's room should be as pretty as possible, but must not

be hampering to freedom. In other words—should a choice be necessary—freedom is of first importance, and beauty of second. Normal development is checked—sometimes even deformed—by the continuous pressure of restraint. The doll-child is almost certain to turn into an exotic or a prig.

THE IDEAL PLAYROOM

But there is really no reason why a child may not be surrounded by beauty and be free at the same time. The principal requirements of a playroom are that it have plenty of air and light and that it be pleasing but unspoilable. The requirement of air and light would dispose of too-heavy window-hangings; the requirement that it be pleasing would select useful furniture, made cheerful and pretty by the color of its paint or of its slip-covers. A lovely wall-paper, properly varnished, is washable. White or colored organdie curtains for a girl's room, or straight net ones that can pull back for a boy's room, are window-trimming enough, unless the windows be very wide and sunny, and one chooses to hang a plain washable fabric with a wall-paper—or chintz with a plain wall. But whatever the decoration or the furnishing, let the essential requirement be utility. Let the walls and trim and curtains be washable, and the furniture be painted with a standard color, so that it can be easily touched up; a hard-surfaced linoleum floor of attractive color is most serviceable—with small rugs that can be taken up when the children want to play with paint or clay or any other rug-spoiling materials. Or if the floor be covered with a carpet, two or two-and-a-half yards of oilcloth can be laid down on the floor during various occupations, and then can easily be rolled on a stick and kept in a closet or on a shelf when not in use. A double set of slip-covers, so that one set can be on while the other is in the wash, is practical in an especially sooty city. In the country, a well-covered design of chintz will last indefinitely—even with hardest usage.

Among the essential details of furnishing—unless there

be an ample closet—are built-in shelves. Their width and number will depend upon the space required for toys and games as well as books. In the country, the shelves can perfectly well be left open, but in most cities, dirt protection is a necessity. Doors are perhaps most practical, but if curtains are to be used, short ones—like ruffles—hanging from rings on rods across the face of each shelf, are rather more decorative than long curtains. The rods and rings of the lower curtains are hidden by the bottom of the curtains above; the rod of the top one is covered by a projecting wood molding or by a narrow valance. Suitable curtain material might be colored oilcloth with a pinked bottom edge; or it might be chintz or cotton print bound with a contrasting color, or hemmed and left plain.

FOR BIGGER CHILDREN

A settle is an excellent playroom item for the larger children, since it turns into a bench when not in use as a table. Otherwise a big drop-leaf kitchen table painted to match the room is as serviceable as it is unspoilable. If the treatment of it be very marring, the table can have a cover put over it when not in use. A thoroughly practical light to play or study by, is a two- or three-bulb droplight, with a drum-shade, hung over the table. Straight chairs will do perfectly for sitting at the table, but a comfortable old upholstered sofa and a chair or two should be included, if possible.

FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN

A platform is the most useful article of the playroom. A very good size is about three feet wide by five feet long, and is made of ordinary planed boards nailed on two-by-four-inch cross-blocks, bringing the top about five inches above the floor. It is the delight of all younger children, especially boys. On this they can hammer and paint and build blocks, and set out their soldiers, and run their trains—and

leave their armies, or their villages, or their train-tracks in position on it, since a platform is not the floor!

Where there is plenty of room, a small platform and a big train-track platform spell perfection for the child who likes his trains better than anything else. With no place but the floor on which to set out his tracks, the child must spend most of his playtime hooking the tracks together and putting them away again, and gradually getting them so bent that laying them flat and keeping them steady becomes impossible.

Very long ago a collection of tin tracks, growing more and more wobbly, and more and more tiresome to put together and take apart, induced me one Christmas to have a track platform built. It was about four feet by seven, and was a foot high; and on it the beginning of a railway system was laid out and tacked down. From time to time, more tracks, turntables, stations, bridges, and so on, were added, until the platform had eventually to be supplemented by a second one. In fact, it ended by occupying nearly all of the playroom floor. It was of unceasing interest not only to the children to whom it belonged, but to all their friends. The tacks were pulled out and much or little of the track arrangement changed about from time to time, so that it never became monotonous, as is apt to be the way with stationary toys.

One way to make room for a train platform when space is limited, is to have it hinged to the baseboard so that it can be lifted and hooked up against the wall when not in use. Or if you want it out of sight, you can easily have a board top fitted in place of bed-springs on the frame of a disappearing bed, which stands up on end and shuts into a closet.

A doll's house, even if it be small, is one of those toys which are of prohibitive cost if bought. And even when it is bought, it is likely to be completely out of scale, and never very beautiful if judged by the standards applied to an actual house. To make one that is really beautiful requires an architect—or a potential one—who has manual dexterity to a

marked degree. But making a fairly attractive doll's house can be a long-continued occupation for boys as well as girls. The boys—with some help from their father or from a carpenter—can build a well-proportioned house from drawings made on cross-bar paper, and build it to scale.

When the house is finished, the girls furnish it. Furnishings in the Modernistic style are the easiest possible. Nearly all the furniture can be built with a saw and chisel and a small box of blocks. For mantels and overdoors and ornaments of every sort, plastic paint applied to surfaces of not too even detail will smooth them out beautifully. Clay is invaluable as a material, and so is paper-pulp molded when wet and left to dry and harden.

Children are strongly inclined to invent and construct, and although it is true that they rarely have more than the most primitive skill if solely dependent upon themselves, a little enthusiastic cooperation by a grown person—who must, of course, have tact as well as skill—will induce most children to become both inventive and adept.

WHEN THE SLEEPING-ROOM MUST ALSO BE THE PLAYROOM

Beds are great destroyers of floor space. A child's bed alone, when set sideways to the wall, is not very hampering; but when—as usual—the nurse sleeps in the room with a child, or two children occupy the same room, floor space is a problem. The afore-mentioned disappearing bed, which shuts up against a door and then closes into the wall, is not especially appealing from the point of view of beauty; but in a small room it has one undeniable advantage—it can be put out of the way when not needed.

Beds built in tiers, like ships' berths, are another possibility. If you have two such beds, one above the other, the springs of the lower bed can be on the floor, and the top of the mattress not much over a foot high; this allows the upper one to be about four and a half feet from the floor, which is fairly practical, and at least frees the floor space

of one bed. About the only other possibility (barring folding beds) is to choose two daybeds and push them flat against opposite walls, leaving as much floor space as possible between them.

THE COUNTRY PLAYROOM

Wherever possible, a room on the ground floor with its own entry (described in the Hall section of the last chapter) is, of course, ideal. An outdoor playhouse is perhaps most ideal of all. But in an average country house, where no special playroom was included on the architect's plan, a part of the attic partitioned off for the children's use is a perfect substitute. If it be dark and low, a dormer window can give height as well as light. Or any room, no matter which or where, will do for the children's playroom. But, wherever it is, let it be their own. Let them decorate it and furnish it, or possibly build it (with help, if necessary) to suit themselves.

Play-scenery perennially dear to children is that of an imaginary robbers' cave; say, an abandoned doghouse surrounded, like a grotto, with brushwood and stones, and possessing an entrance too small for grown persons. A tree-house with a rope-ladder which the children can mount and then draw up after them is a delight to every boy; and so is a wicket-gate in their playroom door, which they can slide open to see if the one who knocks is a friend to be admitted, or a foe to attack. A front-door bell is an acceptable feature of a girls' playhouse, which no grown people may enter except when invited—or unless they behave as visitors. Such are a few fragmentary suggestions regarding the personality of a true playroom.

In a playhouse, a cooking-stove and other appurtenances of a kitchen have always been items of great importance; but whether the children are to be allowed to have a kitchen under the home roof is something that each mother must decide. If kitchen-furnishings are to be added to a play-

room, the corner where the stove is put must at least be scrubbable and all the utensils kept in a segregated enclosure. Taffy-pulling over by the sofa, biscuit-rolling on the writing desk, and butter brought into close proximity to a freshly papered or painted wall—these are not likely to result in a room that will long keep its freshness.

A little outbuilding kitchen is another matter.

FURNITURE FOR A CHILD'S ROOM

Much furniture is and has always been made for children. Some of it is in the form of undersized replicas of real

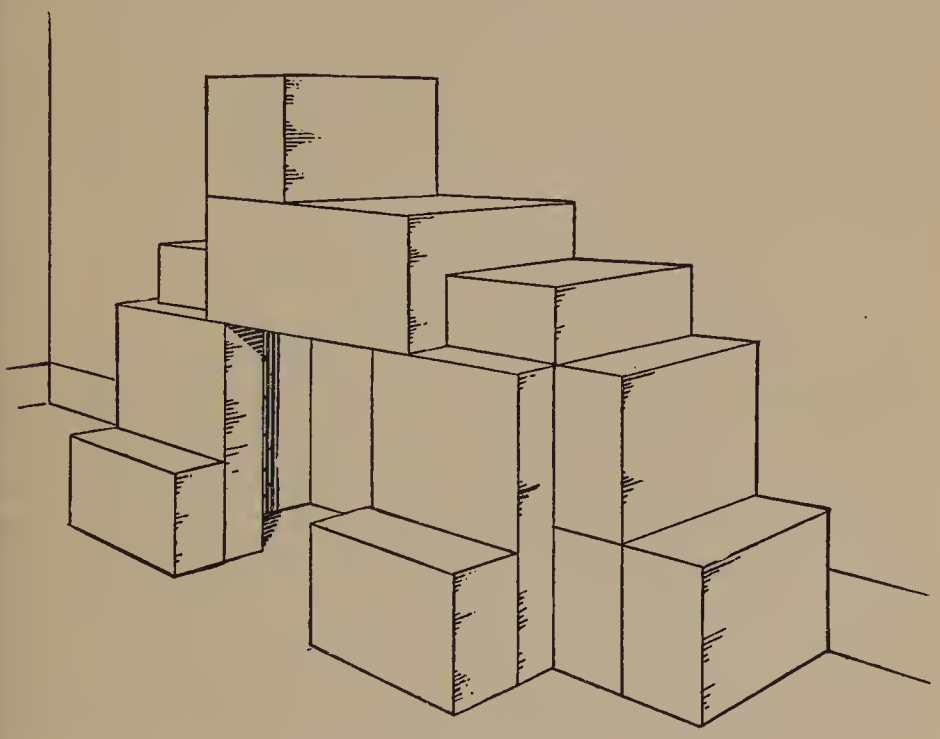


Fig. 136
ALL LITTLE CHILDREN LOVE TO CLIMB

furniture, and some of it is specially designed for the children. Many of the nursery examples turned out by the modernists have little to recommend them, as they are heavy,

awkward, inclined to be grotesque, uncomfortable, and very expensive. Certain pieces of climbing furniture—like an irregular tower mounting against a wall, and built of blocks that are either shelves or boxes—might be substituted for the ordinary toy shelves, to give a modernistic accent and to delight the young child whose chief impulse is to climb. (See Fig. 136.)

Picture-book furniture ornamented with the animals or characters of the child's favorite books can have much charm. The idea lends itself, moreover, to an infinite variety of interpretations. Headboards or footboards can be cut with a jig-saw into whatever outlines a child may like—animals, flowers, trees, gardens, toy villages, fairy scenes, or various toys; they need not be difficult for any carpenter and house painter—or almost anyone else—to do.

Or, if the furniture and the walls be plain, a few curtains or slip-covers of nursery fabrics such as those designed by Tony Sarg, in themes of toys and fairy-tales, are full of charm.

THE DECORATIONS OF THE WALLS

Of all the rooms for children that I have ever seen, either actually or pictured, the decoration that stands out beyond every other is that which Helen Benton Minnich painted for her own child. It was illustrated in *The House Beautiful.* One of the walls was covered with pictures of the most famous domes and towers of the world. They mounted one above the other with the ethereal lightness of dream buildings, and yet they were equally real. The Capitol at Washington, the Brooklyn Bridge, and the Woolworth Building —as I remember—were at the bottom just above the chair-rail. St. Peter's, the leaning tower of Pisa, and the Taj Mahal were at the top. Another wall had a decorative treatment of gas and oil tanks; still another was a country landscape.

The imagination, beauty, and unending interest in these paintings are something that few could duplicate as they should be duplicated—to fit the imagination of a certain

child. And unless the decoration did just that, the whole intention of it would be lost. There should be walls with pictures of ships for a ship-lover, with machinery for one whose bent is mechanics, with scenes from the tales best beloved by a child who lives in a land of fairy-tales. But, alas! such decoration is possible only through the hand of an artist—a very imaginative and gifted artist, who sees and feels and can therefore transcribe the imagination of a child.

But cruder varieties of decoration are possible to those of us who can attempt to draw at all, and we can work them out as any imaginative child, if encouraged, will direct. And the unimaginative child is as rare as the dog that does not leap and bark, or the lamb that does not gambol, or the flowering plant that does not bloom. If we cannot draw or paint, we can at least cut out with scissors and wield a mucilage brush.

The only objection to many of the most effective wall-papers is that their pattern so monotonously repeats. Unless one buy a scenic paper, what else could it do? Scenic papers are very expensive—much too expensive for the average mother to put in the children's room—very expensive for most of us to put in any room. But the cutting out and rearranging of the designs of repeating wall-papers is a diversion that has great possibilities. Moreover, the trick of using such cut-out designs as patterns for silhouettes drawn lightly with a pencil and then filled in with lacquer paint is not difficult at all, and it is one capable of many variations. For instance, choosing a wall-paper with trees, and another with foliage on it and birds or more tree-branches, we can cut out the motives and draw around them and fill in with color. For the shading of the design, we follow the original, but in our own color. On a foliage background children can continue to paste birds. For instance, as they find them in magazines, much as birds were pasted on the Chinese tree-branch papers in the eighteenth century.

Of course, if we draw at all—or even if we have a decorative sense, which can sometimes take the place of the far

more exacting talent—wall decorations are not difficult. In making them, however, it is well to remember that four walls overspread with conspicuous repetitions are as deadly boring as overtrimmed furniture. This is why paper cut out and rearranged can be very pleasing, especially when the wall spaces are not too high or too wide. Or perhaps the children might cut out other pictures they like and compose a design of a scattered pattern, with the biggest pictures at the bottom and the tiny ones at the top; and when the wall or the panel is completed, they can shellac it. Or we can buy stencils of whatever we choose and let the children paint—or at least help them to paint—their own walls.

Whether we can help with actual decoration or not, let us at least be sympathetic, and do what we can. When Sallie begs for a sky-blue sprigged-with-silver wall-paper for her room, or for a pink dress, it is not sensible but cruel to paper her room in tan and dress her in brown instead. The child's spirit wilts amid the constant surroundings of tan and brown and other colors repellent to her, until, becoming accustomed to the ugliness, she ceases to care; which is the worst that can happen, since it means that her sense of beauty is perishing. If there is a good reason why she may not have the sky-blue paper—for instance, because it is expensive, and rolls of tan are already in the house—at least explain this to the child, so that she will take her disappointment as something to be endured with cheerfulness, knowing that she will be given a pretty paper when and if it becomes possible. Children are perfectly reasonable beings; a child of three will make herself a consistent ally if you take her into partnership and explain. The mother whom I am criticising is one who, simply out of unwillingness (or inability) to think from the child's point of view, says to herself: "Blue and silver? Nonsense! The child does not know what she wants."

The very little child, as I have said, distinguishes chiefly between brightness and gloom. An average baby of six months will cry if approached too closely by a woman wearing a crêpe veil, and will hold out its arms to one in a dress

that is gay and shining. As the child grows older, its dependence upon mere brightness decreases, and its sense of beauty-values—if this is being trained—naturally develops.

Children invariably become interested in what they take a part in making. A room done for them and given to them is not as developing to their initiative, or to their taste, as is one that they themselves design. If they make a mess of it, what matter? It will teach them to do better next time.

Perhaps this opinion is a personal one. Perhaps the reactions of other children would be different. An experience of my own was this: When I was ten we moved into a new house. I wanted so very much to furnish—and decorate—my own room that my father decided that I should be allowed to try. It was a north room of good size, with plenty of light but not a glimmer of sun. Whether my idea was suggested by wedding decorations, I don't know, but my choice of color for the entire room was pure white and dark leaf-green! I chose a bluish-white paper with a faint silver stipple on it that could be seen only at certain angles. The furniture was white; the bed-hangings and curtains were of white dotted muslin, tied back with garlands of imitation smilax! The carpet was dark green. The single armchair and heavy curtains were of dark green velveteen. There was no relieving color anywhere. The room had no pictures, and its only ornaments were white. Anything more cold and empty and uninviting and lacking in quality could hardly be imagined.

I still remember my bewildered disappointment that the result was not a bit as I had pictured it. I also remember that I thought it fair that nothing be done about it; it had been my own taste and my own choice, and that was that! But I really think that interest in houses was born of this experiment. Its failure made me notice other rooms; it taught me the unforgetable lesson that texture and detail must be supreme to make up for lack of color. The vital importance of color was emphasized by my mother, who, I found on our return from the country the following year, had trans-

formed that same repellent room into a dream of delight, with pale flesh-colored walls and a pink-ground rose-flowered chintz.

Apart from self-expression—which is a quality of a different sort and with quite a different object—the quality of real pictures chosen for the walls should always be good. Good pictures may be prints of value, or they may equally well be home-framed illustrations cut from good magazines. Ornament the walls otherwise, or paper them, or leave them plain; but don't, if you can help it, let children grow up under the daily influence of bad chromos that express no idea whatever, or of other discarded examples of ugliness. Pretty ornaments in glass or china need not be expensive; dirt-colored paint is no cheaper than jade or Chinese blue; ugly wood can be painted or slip-covered; ugly floors as well as trim can be painted, rugs can be dyed, and beautiful chintz of good design can be found at moderate cost if one but care enough to take a little trouble to find it.

In fact, the recipe for making not only the children's room but the whole house charming, is the same as the definition of genius: "Infinite capacity for taking pains."

XVIII

A HOUSE—OR A ROOM—FOR A MAN

THE type of room the average man likes, and feels at home in, should not be easily spoilable. Chairs that look easily breakable, coverings light and perishable in color and texture, all the things that go to the making of feminine rooms, in short, are more or less unfitted to convey the feeling of "home" to men, no matter how attractive the men may think them.

On the other hand, there is neither sense nor beauty in the popular belief that manliness can be expressed only in the sort of solidity suitable for caging a grizzly bear; that a small room set aside for his personal use must be known as a "den," and be furnished with an overstuffed sofa that would support an elephant and with chairs obviously made for baby hippopotamuses. It is not necessary that the office desk and other objects of wood furniture be either of raw-beef-colored mahogany or of fumed oak, or that the entire color scheme be maroon combined with wet-mud brown.

The perfect room for a man has most typically a neutral-colored wall-paper; or perhaps the walls are painted or wood-paneled, or hung with material. But a plain background of solid color against which he can hang whatever he likes—or nothing—is always good. The room should, of course, have a fireplace if possible, a deep, low substantial sofa, and deep, low substantial chairs. Even so, they need not be elephantine.

All-over upholstery in a man's room is apt to be better looking than that which is framed in wood, because wood framing to be beautiful should be fragile. Planks and beams or box-shaped contrivances of exaggerated size, made into settings for swollen upholstery, are equally clumsy, whether

the chairs or sofas be labeled "Modern," "Mission," or "Circus Ring." The requirements of an ideal room for a man are very much the same as those of a living room: First of all, the room must look as though it were used. It must, moreover, be obviously comfortable, restful, quietly pleasing or at least negative in color, with plenty of light by day and by night.

WHAT A MAN'S ROOM SHOULD CONTAIN

A man's room should have a big desk or broad writing-table kept properly equipped with a clean blotter, a big well of fresh ink, and a drawer filled with a supply of whatever sort of paper and envelops this particular man is likely to use. In a special drawer there should be mucilage, glue, string, rubber bands, clips, labels, shears, and plenty of stamps —and the children should be forbidden to use any of them!

If possible, there should be provision for a favorite occupation. Books and special magazines if he reads; pipes and whatever he smokes; or, if the room be big enough, a work-bench or drafting-table or other special object of utility for whatever his hobby may be. As suggested for a room for children, a big settle (if it be suitable to the type of the room) is very useful. The drafting-table (see Plate 57) can be turned into a bench. For ordinary use the table would better be supported on lower side-arms, bringing it to average table height. The one in the picture was built for an architect and is at standing height. Its size is not apparent, except by noticing the Hitchcock chair—a rather high-backed one—which comes several inches below the table.

A settle can be made in Jacobean style most suitably, as it was in this period that it was invented. In a mahogany room or in any room of sophisticated style a settle is unsuitable. A gate-leg table is equally good for a man's room —any table, in fact, that can be quickly cleared and have whatever a man may choose spread out on it: maps, papers, photograph prints, stamp collections, clippings—the list is,

of course, unlimited. An unencumbered table is of first necessity for a man who may want to cut, to paste, to draw, to construct almost anything.

Perhaps a man's room is a workshop, perhaps it is principally a place for him and his friends to smoke in after dinner, perhaps it is an office, perhaps it is a room where its owner can go off by himself to rest or to think. The appeal of its furnishing depends entirely upon its suitability to use. An important item for comfort is a well-planned closet—not just a sentry-box with a few hangers around the sides and a shelf toward the top, but one that has its space especially fitted for the things that its owner wants to keep in it.

A HOUSE FOR A MAN

That any normal man should be repelled by the least suggestion of effeminacy is only natural. But even so, there is no reason why the house of a bachelor should be furnished like the display rooms of a cement company. A man's house is apt to be Elizabethan or Spanish, or to seek some other bare-walled, dark wooded effect; but many bachelors' houses of distinction are, with equal suitability, Georgian.

An Elizabethan type of house finishes and furnishes itself, since it cannot be other than masculine, no matter how it is completed. Every open-beamed bare-walled house is essentially masculine, as is the dark, rich coloring of the typical Italian house. A French house of elaboration, on the other hand, is far too feminine to be suitable for a man. Yet a man's Georgian house can be fairly elaborate, if its decoration be strictly classic and the ceilings high.

A very high ceiling makes a room masculine to begin with. So much so that if the ceiling be as much as eleven feet in a room about fifteen by twenty feet, an entirely suitable man's dining-room can be painted an otherwise too feminine color. To paneled walls of pale gray-green, for instance, masculine strength of color can be added by means of window-hangings of crimson grosgrain or even damask

brocade. Such a room would most appropriately have Chippendale furniture or any other not-too-fragile design of mahogany, and either family portraits or steel engravings, or sepia prints in plain dark frames. If the engravings or prints have margins that are white, they should be painted over with a very thin wash of India ink, since staring white margins divert attention from the pictures and disturb the harmony of their surroundings.

The trim and mantel should be severely conventional and dignified. If the ceiling be only moderately high, the lambrequin should be set high over the windows, and the curtains cut long enough to train half a yard or more on the floor in order to add the utmost dignity of length.

The decorations of any room in a man's house can also—and very suitably—be modernistic (see Chapter XXII).

FEMININE TENDENCIES OF LOW CEILINGS

Low-ceilinged rooms may not risk feminine color or materials. The best low-ceilinged rooms in the house of a man are those which are crudely primitive, or those which characterize his personal tastes. For a sea-lover, plain wood-paneling suggestive of a ship's cabin would be suitable. All plain wood-lined rooms are good, as are also walls painted or papered in neutral tones of putty, or sand, or olive-gray, or wrapping-paper brown, made colorful by many books (red ones!).

For a man's study—unless he never reads—the most furnishing decorations are well-filled book-shelves, not too closely matched. Odd lots of books, reference books in calf or leather, or at most, sets of favorite authors in cloth bindings, are far more suggestive of the man who reads than are even rows of splendidly-tooled bindings—unless bindings are his hobby.

For the upholstery of a man's living-room, wool damask or rep or velveteen is quite as suitable as leather. True, one always associates a man's room with morocco or pigskin or

other leather, even though one rather wonders whether it is lack of vanity, lack of self-assertion, or something else that induces certain men—especially those who are fastidious about their clothes—to take meekly the polish of coat-backs and elbows, that leather upholstery is inclined to give. Tufted leather was not so bad, but it is now out of fashion, which is rather too bad, since a flat-cushioned leather chair is inclined to be slithering to sit on, as well as a veritable cloth-polishing buffer.

In the illustration of the very distinguished man's room in Plate 44, the set-in of damask on the seat and back of the big leather chair is an excellent anti-polish device, and is notably well contrived. Other good men's rooms are illustrated in Plates 37 and 45. The living-room in Plate 29 is a low-ceilinged room that would be equally appropriate for the house of a man alone or for a family house. This is also true of the dining-room in Plate 22, the hall in Plate 30, the dining-room in Plate 38, and the living-room in Plate 27.

SUITABLE AND UNSUITABLE

In other words, all rooms of dignity and untrimmed simplicity are suitable for a man. Curtains may be of beautiful stuffs, but they must be plain and severe in effect. Colors should be either deep or neutral. A bachelor's house may have great elegance without becoming feminine, if it be restrained. Frilly curtains, too many ornaments, fragile furniture, attenuated decorations—especially those in a high key of color—are effeminately unsuitable to the use of a man. Emptiness is an asset of suitability—especially in a man's drawing-room or any room that is set apart for his guests. Emptiness is always an essential of classic beauty and of dignity.

A man's study can properly be cluttered with books. Possessions of personal use can overflow in a room that expresses use rather than beauty. In a man's house, ornaments solely for ornament should be very carefully chosen; a mantel should not be a parade-ground for trifling objects. A clock

and two plain vases or tankards or any other pair of objects—whether their value be great or trifling—is quite enough. A lamp, a few well-bound books, a bowl of flowers, a few ornaments of suitable size may be necessary to furnish the larger tables; but on smaller ones, an ash-tray, match-box, and lighter are sufficient.

A very good living-room for a man is one with perfectly plain sealed-in walls of pine or cypress, lightly stained and waxed, and with olivish-green corduroy upholstery. If he is not one who reads, his walls might be hung with etchings, or sporting prints, or ship pictures, or enlarged photographs, or drawings of whatever subjects interest him. One room like this has shelves filled with big and little boat-models—which at the moment seem to have routed the stuffed birds and lacquered fish of thirty years ago.

One material of decoration that must neither be misunderstood nor overlooked is chintz. Popular "den" builders to the contrary notwithstanding, chintz is entirely suitable to the room or the house of a man. Not chintz of the pink-roses-and-blue-ribbon-bow-knot variety—scarcely! But nothing could be easier than to pick out an ideal chintz for every room in every thoroughly masculine house imaginable. No material ever designed so perfectly combines the qualities of use, of beauty, and of homelike appeal.

One of the most beautiful—and suitable—bedrooms or sitting-rooms possible to design for a man might have Chippendale furniture, plain walls in any very light grayed tint, curtains, bedspread, and upholstery (or slip-covers) in a chintz of well covered and moderately large design in colors that are soft but glowing. The ground-color of the chintz, if neutral, could be matched by the color of the walls—and possibly by the trim.

Or an Elizabethan, Jacobean, or any other dark-wood-lined room, with dark furniture, and with its color supplied by the curtains and bed-covers and the upholstery of chair or sofa, is always excellent.

William Lawrence Bottomley, Architect

A MAN'S ROOM OF COMFORT AND GREAT DISTINCTION

[PLATE 44]

Howard & Frenaye, Architects

AN INVITING MAN'S ROOM, IN WHICH THE COLOR IS SUPPLIED IN GAY PRINT AND THE MELLOW QUALITY OF OLD BOOKS

[PLATE 45]

XIX

THE HOUSE OF CHARM AT LEAST EXPENSE

THIS chapter is written especially for two types of house-owners. The first is one who, having a limited amount of money for a new house and its furnishing, would like to know on what to spend and how to save. The second is the owner of a conspicuously unattractive house who helplessly exclaims: "Ugly old house! Ugly old furniture! Nothing can be done about it; we can't afford to buy all new."

So let us answer the second house-owner's problem first, and see what *can* be done—about some of it, at all events. To begin with, we must consider what is meant by "ugly." Is the house ugly outside, or is it ugly inside, or both? Is it comfortable or uncomfortable? If the latter, is it because it is too small, or is it uncomfortable because badly arranged? Are its furnishings hopeless? How hopeless? Before taking up the detailed questions of comfort and beautification of the interior, let us begin with the outside.

THE UGLY OUTSIDE

To the chapters on Building, Remodeling and Garden Decoration, and to the many other exterior suggestions (see Index), there are only a few exterior considerations to add. If the sum to be spent is very small, it is best under most circumstances to spend the whole of it on the interior—except the renovating of such parts of the outside as may be shabby or out of repair.

A well-cared-for appearance is of first importance; color, second; inviting door and windows, third; garden decoration, fourth. After these four essentials—put them in which-

ever order you choose—comes the remodeling of the roof and façade.

No really shabby down-at-heel house can have charm, any more than clothes can have charm if they are out at elbows. But to remake an average exterior into a semblance of architectural convention is not half as important as to keep—or produce—an effect of inviting comfort, for this, above all other attributes, expresses the quality of *home*.

We all know houses—old-fashioned, mid-Victorian ones, especially—that may perhaps have little if any architectural merit, and yet, because of their air of well-cared-for comfort, have an appeal very much like that of certain people whose loveliness of character shining in their faces makes them seemingly beautiful.

The reason why certain brand-new—often very expensive—houses are antipathetic to taste and to sentiment, is because their builders have attempted to apply charm as though it were a cosmetic. The charm of a house, like the charm of a person, is an outward manifestation of inward grace. Artificially applied, it is like nothing so much as rouge on an old woman's cheeks.

This last is perhaps not a very happy simile, since the color of a house is of utmost importance, and ugly or disturbing color is impossible to beautify. Neutral, unobtruding color is best for commonplace architecture, because it camouflages structural shortcomings; it might be defined as the color nearest to that of its neighbors. (For definite color suggestions, see Index.)

Third in order of importance to the charm of a house, are the windows. Casement windows, oriel windows, little copper-topped shop windows, big modern studio windows, all are equally embellishing to the style of architecture they best suit. Perhaps windows are my monomania! A house without full-sized windows in the bathrooms and windows all over the place holds no charm for me. Perhaps you like gloom and darkness; perhaps you can even endure slits in the walls of bathrooms; in such case, my own insatiability

for windows may be left at that! But to me windows—wide ones, and lots of them—are smiling and friendly on the outside of a house as well as cheerful on the inside.

I have always believed—and practised—the theory that comfort, which includes light and air and cheerfulness on the inside of a house, is interpreted by the outside. This is my own idea of why certain houses less architecturally perfect than others have greater charm. I do grant that a house of importance may not be built like a factory; but there is a very wide range between rooms with whole glass walls and rooms with dormers like nothing so much as long narrow horse-stalls.

I might as well say frankly that I do not like steep roofs; I do not like their looks on the outside, and I hate their cut-into spaces on the inside. I'd rather have a little square room with big windows than have the biggest L-shaped room ever made with no matter how many windows away off at one end or the other. After all, few and little windows are no more becoming to a house than squint-eyes and pinched lips are becoming to a face.

The two remaining items of importance, remodeling and garden decoration, will be found in their own chapters. Other details of the exterior can be found through the Index. And now let us consider the real subject of this chapter, which is economical beautification of the interior.

BEAUTIFYING THE INTERIOR

If genius is the capacity for taking infinite pains, talent for creating a home of completely satisfying personality might be called the capacity for observing infinite detail. And if we except establishments that deliberately assume perfection, the ability to endow an average house with beauty and charm depends not so much on expenditure as upon your ability to recognize the potential possibilities, not merely in what you buy, but in what you already possess. At all events, ugliness is quite as often the result of unper-

ceived opportunity as of a slim purse. That an entirely empty purse can buy nothing is true, but it is equally true that the contents of a very moderately filled one spent knowingly can produce far greater beauty than a big bank account squandered with little sense and no sensibility.

Under average conditions, the outstanding qualification of beauty in every interior is color.

The greatest aid to charm is comfort, which includes convenience.

The theory of color-harmony and also certain phases of the behavior of color have been described in their own chapters, but the temperament of color, meaning its amiability, its indifference, or its cruelty to mixed varieties of furnishings, was not included.

The house-owner who can build or buy or completely remodel—who can start out with everything new and throw out every item that displeases—has no color problem but that of her personal decision and taste. The problem that is a far greater test of skill is ability to combine a heterogeneous collection of objects in a series of rooms of no especial beauty—and then to select a color that will be kind to all these objects and induce them to be kind to each other, and not stand off each by itself and shout, "Oh, look! Look how ugly!"

CRUEL COLORS

Certain walls behave exactly in this latter way. Those which have smooth-finished paneling in cream, oyster-gray, or turquoise blue, are kind to beauty, but cruel to ugliness. Turquoise-blue has the tendency, more than any other color, to make every object placed in front of it as conspicuous as though in the glare of a calcium light—which is why decorators invariably choose it as a background against which to display their wares. A plain plastered wall accentuates color and defines outline—and yet not too critically. But a cream or pale-gray paneled wall of beautiful finish ex-

hibits the shortcomings of each object placed against it with cold discrimination.

COLORS THAT ARE KIND

Colors that are kindest to ordinary objects include sand, light pinkish taupe, creamish faun—or any of the pastel or twice "grayed" colors (at high light, if you choose) indicated in the spokes of the color chart. (See Chapter X.)

Walls that are somewhat primitive in effect, such as those of rough finished plaster, or those that are papered with any of the unpretentious diaper or Colonial designs, all make sympathetic backgrounds for odd assortments of furniture and possessions.

Especially friendly to furniture that is somewhat overheavy are the colors that range from browns, coppers, russets, and old reds, to grayed yellow-greens, egg-plant purple, and sand. Combinations of these colors are to be had in many semiglazed percales that are entirely lovely, and that sell for a dollar or less a yard. There are also gay cotton prints of very small designs that are especially beguiling in primitive or cottage or bungalow surroundings, many of which can be bought for as little as twenty-five cents a yard. Unfadable chintz can be found for a dollar, or a little over, a yard, and sun-fast materials are to be had at from fifty cents a yard up.

The thing to do, of course, is to find material that is becoming to the majority of the things that you have, and then either remove the few that are jarring or change their color by painting, dyeing, and slip-covering.

KEEPING DOWN THE COST

Before attempting to say how much can be done for how little money, it is necessary to ask not merely what sort of house or apartment you have to begin with, and what you have to put in it, but first of all, how much can

you design, devise, or make yourself? If you must turn a room over to a decorator, it is necessarily much the same as going to an importer for a dress. In both cases, the chances are that the result will be good but the bill will be long.

On the other hand, if you have taste and knowledge enough to see opportunities—above all, if you are blessed with what is known as manual dexterity—you can have rooms at the cost of materials and at the price of the lost opportunities of others, as will be explained presently. At all events, whether you are having the actual work done for you, or whether you are going to do much of it yourself, color is the miracle-worker in all beautification of ugliness. Paint, dye, and slip-covers are literally the three magic gifts of the fairy tales.

Although the problem naturally varies with each example, the procedure is the same. The first thing to do is to collect the furnishings that must be used, and then, as best you can, bring them into harmony. For golden oak and unpainted brick, see pages 191-193. If the trim is mahogany or dark-stained wood, and you like it or may not change it, putty-colored walls are about the best—either painted or papered in plain three-inch stripes—and a colorful, rather big-patterned chintz.

A room impossible to refine without scraping and refinishing is one whose walls are gobbed with plastic paint. It will look like a tawdry grotto on a scenic railway and make all its surroundings look common. A whole room of wood is one thing, but crude dark trim is unreasonably exacting. It must be perfect in design, it must look hand-made, it must seem to be simple, but be in reality handled with supreme skill. It must, moreover, have just the right furnishings or it shouts "Common, common, see how common!"

HOW TO GO ABOUT IT

However, to take a specific example, let us say that you have an old-fashioned room that you want to do over. Let us

say that you have an old rosewood sofa and four chairs covered in somewhat faded but nice olive-grayed green rep, or wool damask; that you have a rather clumsy but comfortable mahogany secretary desk; a Morris chair in golden oak; a jig-saw-walnut spring-rocker upholstered in peacock-blue plush; a gate-legged table, good in design but "high-lighted" in finish; a Turkish rug that is genuine, but crude in color. Let us say that the room is high studded, and has a Victorian but good mantel, and tiles set around the fireplace.

Let us begin with the tiles. Do you like them? Are they good or horrible? If they are good Dutch or Italian, then you would best attune your room to them, which might allow you to keep the olive upholstery, or might not. If they are Majolica, perhaps by using the olive of your present covering as a background you could work out a very good color scheme in olives, browns, and yellows, with an accent of russet-red. If the tiles are blue Delft, the olive-green would be pretty bad—even though you add blue-violet and red-orange, which completes the triad. Rose and cream are the right colors; or blue, blue-green, and green. If the tiles are without value or beauty, it would be best to have their surface hammered off and let them be cemented over—unless you fear spoiling that which is beyond spoilability, which is an often-encountered complex.

A woman of taste will sometimes allow bad tiles or bad woodwork to destroy a room utterly rather than to take the initiative herself and destroy the tiles or rip off the trim. She will also let a piece of furniture spoil a room rather than paint over a perfectly ordinary surface of wood! Curious arithmetic!

But because I personally prefer plain cement and painted surface to wrong-colored tiles or an unbecoming variety of wood, this is no reason why you should agree with me.

Let us say, however, that the tiles in this room are Majolica and very nice, and that the olive-green upholstery makes a very good background. It would be suitable to paper the walls a light gray-greenish color or an equally neutral but

light tint of taupe. You might paint the Morris chair olive green, sandpaper the shadings off the gate-leg table, refinish the floor with paint—or apply an even stain—and wax. Have the rug dyed as soft a brownish olive as it will take. Hide the jig-saw rocker under a slip-cover of heavy material, chintz or percale. Ideal coloring for the latter would be a light-grayed yellow-green background with roses and tulips in gray-orange or orange-salmon, and an occasional big cream-colored rose or peony. All department stores as well as regular decorators have quantities of materials that will bring almost any unassorted furnishings into harmony. (See Chapter X.)

Having suggested, a few pages back, that beauty at little cost depends somewhat upon your own facility, let me explain what I mean by a rather personal example: Most families have words of their own, no less than characteristic habits—or whatever one chooses to call them. In our family, we long ago coined the definitions, a "pay-for," a "make," and a "fake." A pay-for was a perfection that has to be bought, a make was a perfection that could be made by ourselves; a fake was a contrived effect. Whenever we thought of something or perhaps saw something that we wanted to put in a house, we always put the question to each other, "Can we make it, or fake it? Or is it a pay-for?" Whether it was a pay-for or not depended equally upon the exactions of the house and upon our own natural or acquired expertness.

PAY-FOR ITEMS

Items that have to be bought include plumbing fixtures, floor coverings, interior painting and papering, furniture, lamps, ornaments, pictures, mirrors, books, table appointments, kitchen utensils. And yet, even in this list, silver, glass, china, and kitchen utensils are alone unmakable and unfakable. I would not pretend that anyone can make plumbing fixtures; but in a simple house that makes no pretense to fineness of detail, partial decoration of color can be added to

WINDOWS THAT LOOK OUT INTO THE MIDST OF A FLOWER GARDEN

[PLATE 46]

Walker & Gillette, Architects

A BAY-WINDOW, A TERRACE, AND AN OVERHANGING TREE, ALL ITEMS OF INEVITABLE APPEAL

[PLATE 47]

inexpensive fixtures by enameling—or lacquering—the outside of an ordinary porcelain-lined iron tub, and all other paintable surfaces.

MAKES

Makes include all the things which any member of the family is able to do professionally well. Floor-coverings, for instance, may figure in this list in the form of home-made rag, braided, hook, felt, and other rugs. Anyone can make a rug, such as the one in front of the fire in Plate 50. This is not a hook-rug but a cross-stitch rug made with especially heavy wool and canvas. The ship was home-designed, but endless patterns for cross-stitch can be bought. Hook-rugs are also made by many people. And embroidered petit-point for chairs is almost as much of a vogue to-day as it used to be among the ladies of the Middle Ages.

Mural painting is the most valuable "make" there is, but for this there must be a genuine artist. Ordinary room-painting, however, is within the ability of many owners of houses that are unexacting, and decoration is limited only by imagination.

Anyone should be able to make curtains and slip-covers. Lamp-shades made of chiffon, which have come back into fashion with the modernistic lamps, are merely a question of sewing neatly. Each wire in the frame is covered first with strips of folded china silk wound in a tight spiral (like a fire-lighter) and sewed tight where it ends. This gives you a foundation on which to sew the covering smoothly and tautly. Paper lamp-shades—unless left raw-edged at top and bottom, and merely held on a frame—are so difficult as to be almost impossible for an amateur to attempt. Undecorated ones, however, are for sale at all the art counters of the department stores. Those of white paper bound with a narrow gilt-paper passe-partout are hard to find, but manila-paper shades bound at top and bottom with gold gimp are for sale everywhere. And decoration with set-in prints or cut-out and glued-on pictures can be done by anyone.

FAKES

Fakes, according to our home-made definition, are things that we can do well enough ourselves for stop-gap effects—sometimes well enough for permanency. Many fakes, in this sense, include things that anyone of normal dexterity should be able to do easily—if necessary.

Time was when painting a whole room or even small pieces of furniture could be done passably well only by an expert, since the inexpertly handled brush left streaks with stubborn persistence. But to-day dozens of varieties of paints are being manufactured especially for the amateur. One might call them paints that cover their own brush-tracks, and they can be applied by anyone who will put a moderate amount of paint or lacquer on a brush, and carefully cover a surface with an *even* quantity of it. Painting a large wall-surface or a door is a different story; or maybe I only think it is because once, twenty-odd years ago, I attempted to paint an entire room with brush-tracking paint and made a thoroughly bad job of it.

But if you *can* do your own painting, the cost of paint by the gallon can is quite different (and so, too, perhaps is the result)! from that of the finished room handed over to you by the painter.

One word of warning: In case you mind the smell of oil and turpentine—or, still worse, of banana oil—it is only fair to tell you that it can be very sickening. In fact, to be shut in a room with the smell of lacquers can be as bad as two days out on a rough sea to a worst sailor! But if you can paint outdoors, lacquering ugly pieces of furniture is not difficult. And decoration with decalcomania can be done by anyone. Decalcomania for furniture must, of course, be the transfers made for decorative purposes, and not the little ordinary ones sold by toy stores for children to play with. You have to use an adhesive preparation that is bought with them, and finish with several coats of varnish or shellac, rubbed off with pumice. (Directions are given by the manufacturers.)

The hardest painting detail for an amateur is painting a fine straight line. The only way to attempt it is to draw both edges of the line with a pencil and ruler, and then fill in with a very fine brush. A painter or a draftsman simply draws it free-hand. Pure magic!

All sorts of ugly furniture, battered furniture, crude furniture, can be painted. If it is a half-way good piece of wood surface, and is varnished, begin by removing the varnish with turpentine, banana oil, or denatured alcohol, first trying a spot to see which takes it off most easily. Some paints, it may be added, can be put on top of varnish without any trouble at all. Often as good as decalcomania, and sometimes better, are cut-out pictures, pasted on and shellacked. But don't use too many.

All makeshift furniture that is used until better can be found or afforded, belongs in the list of fakes. For that matter, greatly to be preferred is a plain pine drop-leaf kitchen-table with cheapest wooden chairs of no cost, painted attractively, as compared with some expensive furniture that is not what you have in mind, and whose price therefore represents a waste.

For a house that I was doing for a client, we faked many makeshifts, because objects of real beauty were beyond price. Amidst the horrors of an extremely bad furniture department I picked out the cheapest chairs and tables that were possible in outline. They were villainous in finish, but we put on several coats of varnish to make a smooth surface, sandpapered it, and then painted on top of the varnish, thus disguising the porous wood. Copying an eighteenth-century chair, we painted them all a black-brown, with very little striping of wiped-off gold, and then sketched a Chinese pagoda design on the chair splats in gray and greenish-brown and black. Thus, with the aid of a few odd hours of time, a perfectly good-looking dining-room set of furniture was faked for less than twenty dollars.

Many varieties of decorations are also possible with very little ingenuity. An ordinary six- or eight-paneled door can

be made lovely by having a piece of looking-glass (not beveled) fitted into each panel, and then painting or applying a decalcomania border around the panel-frames. Or a fake would be to cut out a running pattern in silver paper—very carefully, of course—glue it around the panels, and either leave it in flat silhouette or shade it with sepia or with neutral tint. When thoroughly dry, everything but the looking-glasses could be coated with shellac. If you can't draw, you can get a pattern design at an art-embroidery department, cut it out, and trace around it. In fact, the things that can be done with scissors, a glue-pot, and shellac would fill a book. In the make-shop of our family my own share was everything that could be done with scissors and mucilage, or needle and thread.

I am told that few children of to-day are taught to cut and sew—that there is no time in modern life for such an old-fashioned occupation. But when the child grows up and has a house of her own, ability to cut and sew whatever she may think of is decidedly an advantage, since the cost of having every item bought—or made to order—runs into hundreds or even thousands of dollars. About 80 per cent. of these dollars can be saved by those who have skill to make things, and the money spent instead on pay-fors. Of course, workmanship that is less than good is merely the definition of a botch, and botches are becoming neither to furniture nor to house.

A dressing-table is an article that can be made out of almost anything—a sawed-off bureau or a shabby table with a broad top nailed on it. The top can be painted and trimmed round with a petticoat and cover of what you like, and any kind of mirror can be added, either standing on the table or hung behind it.

Bed-springs and mattresses are absolutely pay-fors. But a bed-frame is unnecessary—beyond a platform on which to stand the springs. In case of no bed-frame, there must be a valance from the top of the box-spring to the floor, and curtains hung at the head.

Sofa cushions, slip-covers, heavy curtains, lambrequins—the many things which cost much when bought or made to order, and which, made by yourself, cost little—bring down the total more than most people realize.

A FEW ASPECTS OF ECONOMY

Except those of us who are so rich as to have no need to count the cost of anything, or so poor as to have nothing to spend, we all have our pet extravagances or pet economies. My own pet economy is to refuse flatly to buy for five dollars what I can make for fifty cents. To me it seems plain lack of intelligence to pay a high price for nothing. I believe in paying whatever you must—and can—for something that really contributes quality to a house or a room; but I also believe in spending nothing for what is worth nothing. Buy a truly beautiful object—no matter what price its value—if you can pay for it; but don't buy something half-way expensive that is really worthless.

To translate the proposition into clothes: Get a rabbit coat for seventy-five dollars or get a higher-grade better coat for two or three hundred dollars, or whatever it may be. But don't buy a paper-stiff light-yellow mink coat for twelve hundred dollars, because that is twelve hundred dollars thrown away! In the same way, pay what you must for an eighteenth-century secretary that is a beautiful example, but don't throw away three hundred dollars on a piece of furniture that—to one who knows anything—looks exactly like stiff yellow mink!

WHAT TO SPEND ON

A few nice things instantly lift the value of an interior. A conspicuously good secretary, or break-front cabinet; a good chair or two, or a pair of console tables with mirrors; a foundation of genuine beauty, upon which to build gradually, later on; a few ornaments of value; and, above all, beautiful lamps and shades. One might even put lamp-shades

at the top of the list, since they are accents of greatest value to the beauty of every evening room.

It is consoling to remember that negative, unnoticeable things are easily put into the background, while the more conspicuous situations receive the things of worth. But objects of screaming vulgarity are no more to be subdued than a screaming child that keeps on screaming throughout a railroad journey, or wherever escape from its disturbance is impossible. Nothing, for instance, can be done to quiet a violent rug or to shut out other abominations of color or form in furnishings that are placed where the eye cannot escape them. In short, only a major operation can refine a vulgar room. Major operations, of course, include reconstruction with carpenter's tools, painting and upholstering, or even discarding and buying new.

ILLITERACIES IN HOUSE-FURNISHING

Illiteracies of language are defined by grammar, illiteracies of clothes are recognized by nine women out of ten on sight —because American women are more smartly turned out than any other women in the world. But illiteracies in house-furnishing must be far from unusual, if certain objects found in catalogues, house-furnishing departments, and advertising pages find any buyers. Obviously they do, or those who offer them for sale would be out of business.

In the beautification of ugliness, put down these villainies: Every object whatever made of shaded wood, oxidized metal, art bronze (except in green), brushed brass, stained glass set in metal lamp-shades, and all useless wriggles and shadings.

A certain amount of color whisked on and wiped off—such as smooth, even bands of half-worn-off gold or other coloring on painted furniture—can be perfect. But remember, antiquing furniture is very like making up a face. How often does it look well! How often false? You say it is all in the eye that sees? Exactly!

UPHOLSTERED MATERIALS

If you find a material that really makes the room, buy it. But be sure—if it is very expensive—that nothing else will take its place at half or quarter the price. In saying this I am taking it for granted that you are not one of the herd of price-tag sheep, who think highest cost evidence of value! For such as these, this chapter is not written. No chapter ever can be written for them. How could it! But whether high-priced or low-priced, do not recklessly buy materials that will stand neither wear nor sun. Many materials that are quite cheap are color-fast; others that are very expensive fade at the sight of the sun. I bought one little print that cost fifty cents a yard, and its fourth seashore season finds it looking as colorfully gay as it did at first. On the other hand, a beautiful linen chintz at sixteen dollars a yard faded so completely that it had to be replaced at the end of six weeks. This does not mean that cheap things are good and expensive things bad, but merely that it is not always a question of cost. Guaranteed chintzes or other materials that will be replaced by their manufacturers if they fade, are genuine economy—especially those whose guarantee includes the cost of reupholstering. A certain well-known manufacturer replaced for me both upholstery and curtains of an entire room because a guaranteed chintz faded.

Best upholstery silks cannot be equaled—not completely. But a certain synthetic taffeta at less than three dollars a yard wears splendidly and has much of the luster and beauty of the regular upholstery taffeta at ten and a half dollars. Dress taffeta—at least the several dozen pieces that I have on various occasions tried—stands neither the sun nor even the shade.

Excellent materials in manufactured silk, in wool, jute, and cotton, are to be had in almost every dry-goods store in every city in the United States; or samples can be procured from the great stores of the greater cities, if you will write them what you want.

FURNITURE ADAPTATIONS

Perhaps the greatest economy possible in the house of little cost can be made in furniture—both by adapting it to different uses and by subjecting it to plastic operations. By adaptation is meant merely that objects which are unsympathetic to the position for which they are intended can quite possibly be embellishing as well as useful elsewhere. A secretary-desk, intended for a library, can equally well be put in a man's bedroom or in his study. A typical *chaise longue* will go perfectly well into any informal down-stairs sitting-room that is at all feminine. A highboy in a living-room, or even in a drawing-room, is no novelty; and neither is a bureau (called commode) if mirror-supports be taken off. Or if an enormous Provençal wardrobe be completely clogging to the bedroom it is intended for, it may have its back taken off and its depth cut shallow and be adjusted as a doorway between the hall and the pantry, or between the hall and the children's playroom. For the former use, the apron at the bottom would have to be cut through in the center and each half fastened to the bottom of each door; but as a playroom entrance the step-over into the inside of the wardrobe makes just the sort of personable doorway that children find delectable.

An extension dining-table that does not go with the dining-room furniture can be divided, and half of it used as a console in the hall, while the other half will serve as a magazine-table in the living-room or elsewhere. In other words, if half of it may be put where all of it is impossible, divide it, even though half must go into the attic!

The very good bookcase table that is given with the 1930 edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* is useful in any house where it can be stood in the middle of a room or with one end to the wall; but in many houses (including my own) where this arrangement is impossible, it can be cut lengthwise through the center and a pair of bookcase consoles made instead. At least that is what I did! It must, of course, be

Firm of Kenneth M. Murchison, Architects

THE FIRST UNIT OF A DELECTABLE HOUSE OF LEAST EXPENSE

[PLATE 48]

William F. Dominick, Architect

A BEDROOM WITH EVERY DETAIL OF INVITING COMFORT

[PLATE 49]

emphasized that cutting furniture—or what might very truthfully be called destroying it—should not be done recklessly. It is suggested merely as an alternative. If a misfit threatens to spoil a whole room, it is allowable to risk spoiling the misfit.

If an object be of great value, it should be rather prayerfully considered. Even so, in the small, low-ceilinged rooms of modern houses or apartments, the most beautiful piece of furniture imaginable would better be reduced to a size fitting the proportions of the room, than be allowed to spoil the scale. If it be too perfect to alter, and too out-of-scale to use, then sell it or give it away, or put it in storage. But don't hope that it embellishes the room it does not fit, any more than you would hope that a hat five sizes too small or too big could possibly be other than grotesque. Many pieces of furniture that are now unsightly encumbrances could be made beautifully becoming, were their depth reduced.

An average room can perfectly digest such a piece of furniture, for instance, as an eighteenth-century break-front bookcase, because, in the first place, its fragile design counteracts the amount of wall space it occupies; and in the second, its shallowness further diminishes the effect of size. The pieces which obtrude are these which project far into the room. Empire pieces, both French and American, are among the worst offenders, because they are heavy in design as well as thick through, so that it becomes a choice between making them shallow or letting them gobble up the room—or sending them to auction, where, for the sole reason of their depth, they sell for nothing.

PLASTIC OPERATIONS ON FURNITURE

Let us hope that such a piece of furniture is bought by one who has a diagnostician's eye for plastic operations, because a greater asset for one who would furnish a house at least expense is hard to think of. It is a pet asset of my own—which I have so far kept to myself. But if it should prove of

any use to you, you are more than welcome! The value of the idea is this: All big pieces of furniture sell at auction for half or quarter the price of small-sized furniture—sometimes for still less. If you have an eye for adjusting furniture—which is precisely the same as an eye for adjusting clothes—bargains surround you on every side. In other words, you buy the big or the thick pieces at no price at all, and make them into thin and small pieces of value.

Last winter two fifteenth-century refectory tables were sold at auction. They were identical in quality and in age. One was seven feet long by thirty inches wide, the other was twelve feet long by forty inches wide. The small one sold for sixteen hundred dollars and the big one sold for ninety. Nothing was easier than cutting down the top of the big one, and finishing it with wax; the under frame was very narrow, and the long stretchers were simply cut down in length, rejoined, and waxed. The result was a genuinely old table embellishing to any average house.

The reconstruction of a big roll-top office-desk can sometimes be accomplished by cutting off the top and leaving the pigeonholes across the back in the way Sheraton so often did. Scraping and refinishing the surface and putting on good brasses will usually complete the job; but, if necessary, you can also cut down the height or depth.

Perhaps this sounds like spending a fearful amount of money, but it does not necessarily mean that. A carpenter under my own direction reshaped a colossal walnut desk in one day. This particular desk was not cut through the back; had it been, the rebacking of each drawer would have taken another day. In this instance, the wood was good. If it has to be scraped and refinished, the painter's bill can come to more than that of the carpenter—unless you finish it yourself.

Where one has a workshop, meaning that some member of the family happens to like such work as a pastime, one of the small electric polishing machines make refinishing very easy. Remove any excrescences that you dislike with a

chisel. Scrape off varnish with a paint-remover and a scraper, then wrap the polisher with sandpaper or canvas dipped in ground pumice and let the machine do the work. When the surface is prepared, stain and varnish lightly, and then use the wax polisher until the finish is satisfactory. Last of all, put on new brasses.

Apart from cutting down size, furniture operations have many other economical advantages, since ugliness most often is due either to vulgar ornamentation or to vulgar finish. Therefore, if you can look at an object as something to be reconstructed—exactly as you look for possibilities in a house you think of buying to remodel—you will find it quite easy to see that an old bureau can be made into just what you are looking for, by taking off the mirror and putting on new handles; that an old library table can become a treasure, if you chisel off the ornamentation and refinish the surface; or that the marvelous mahogany of a shabby, lumbering desk can, with little or no expense, be changed into a shape that is inoffensive—or even pleasing—to the eye.

As knowledge always develops with practise, your critical faculty soon learns when to accept and when to reject old furniture. Many people say it brings discontent to develop critical standards, because it makes us more often displeased than pleased. Perhaps! But, on the other hand, a critical sense can teach us to construct quite as well as it can encourage us to destroy. We have no right to tear down, of course, unless we do our best also to build; but those who acquire this remaking facility will find their reward in using it, for plastic surgery is an art that can be quite as successful on furniture as on faces. Moreover, it is within the skill of anyone with observation enough to see what can be done.

One might set up a furniture hospital in which deformities could be made into objects of beauty—a fascinating hobby for a man who loves carpentry and good furniture. It would be a godsend in any neighborhood. Without some means of reconstructing furniture, we may as well admit right here that the insurmountable obstacle to a house of

beauty at little cost is the impossibility of buying acceptable wood furniture. In fact, so serious is this handicap that I cannot leave the subject without entering a plea to those who can remove it.

A PLEA TO MANUFACTURERS OF COMMERCIAL FURNITURE AND TO THE STORES WHICH DISPLAY IT

In no country in the world can those whose purses are moderately slim choose more beautiful china, crockery, glass, wall-paper, every variety of textile, than in the United States. We Americans cover our walls, hang our windows, set our tables, make our beds, furnish our bathrooms, and complete our kitchens with objects of beauty and utility at reasonable expense. But, furniture——! Those of us who are able to pay Fifty-seventh Street prices can buy here in New York the most beautiful furniture in the world. But those of us with fastidious tastes and medium-sized bank-accounts have a long, long search to find furniture that is not unspeakably common. In fact, we usually have to go without it—barring what we can find at auctions and perhaps remake!

On special floors of certain department stores, there is a limited selection of lovely things, but, alas! at from two (in one especial New York Store) to four times (in other stores) the cost of the horde of hideosities filling every inch of their own regular furniture department.

Why do they not finish simply and beautifully *one single article* that is for sale on the "regular floor" for purses which are only moderately filled? As for the objects depicted in the catalogues of mail-order houses, I wonder if their manufacturers think it fair that those who happen to have been denied an education in critical taste should be induced to squander their hard-earned money on monsters? If they saw a woman with a baby that had the head of a toad and the body of an armadillo, they would be filled with pity as well as repulsion. True, a deformed article of furniture is scarcely to be compared to the tragedy of a deformed child; yet it is hard to

understand how a reputable manufacturer or merchant can be so callous as to sell deformities to helpless buyers who have had no chance to know what the normal form of beauty should be.

It is, of course, not fair to accuse all manufacturers of wantonly producing ugliness; but, apart from the ubiquitous butterfly table, the Windsor or Hitchcock chair, and a few other Cottage Colonial pieces, it is difficult to feel that the manufacturers are doing their part.

If you, who are a person of taste and cultivation, think I unfairly exaggerate, let me ask to buy a secretary, a sideboard, a dining-room table, a library table—or even a wood-framed drawing-room chair—that is neither vulgar in design nor high-lighted in finish, and to make a note of where you found it, and what you had to pay. I think you will end by agreeing with the foregoing criticism, which applies to wood furniture only. You can get good upholstered furniture at reasonable as well as high prices.

When I wrote the original edition of *Etiquette* in 1922, it was impossible to find ready-to-wear men's clothes of American manufacture that were not freaks. When I rewrote the book in 1928, my arraignment of the clothing manufacturers was deleted, because it was no longer true. Furniture is to-day in exactly the situation that men's clothes were in 1922. One must go abroad to buy, or pay a price far beyond the reach of the average purse. And if you cannot yourself tell good from bad, you can pay every bit as much for bad as for good. The fact that the expensive examples of bad furniture are beautifully made, so that drawers pull out with a finger-nail and doors close with perfect precision, is just an additional item of discouragement, because it tells of expert workmanship gone wrong.

That every manufacturer is eager to supply what the public demands is an excuse too trite for comment. Testing the public's taste by what it must accept or go without, is no proof that we, who *are* the public, might not prefer something very much better, were we given our choice.

Meanwhile, my earnest advice is to remember that until you can find articles that beautify, articles that uglify can be done without. Far better paint an object that you have, or that you can buy for a few dollars at auction, and save until you can find or afford a table or a desk that will contribute distinction, rather than to endure mediocrity because you can find nothing else.

COMFORT ALWAYS AN ASSET

Remember also that the outstanding asset of homelike and inviting charm is comfort. Comfort is, moreover, produced far more often by thoughtful attention to detail than by money-value. Even a rather homely object that is really comfortable is apt to have a certain becomingness—unless it be jarringly vulgar or unsuitable. Other things being equal, comfort is the most important attribute of charm.

Since comfort and convenience are both discussed at length in other chapters, let us at this time merely note that objects of comfort should not be discarded until other objects of greater beauty and equal comfort take their place. Keep an old desk that has plenty of useful space; its obvious utility will gloss over its shortcomings. Slip-cover the old chair that has worn into hollows, if the hollows fit you, so that you find comfort in them. In other words, don't change old for new unless the comfort of the old will be equaled by that of the new.

AGAIN THE ASSET OF SUITABILITY

My own little house in Massachusetts is especially suitable as an illustration for this (also the next) chapter, because a house of charm at least expense was my objective, precisely. I wanted a house that would be no responsibility, a house in a friendly neighborhood where a lock on the front door would be unnecessary, because even if it were to stand wide open, its tranquillity would be undisturbed. I wanted exactly that type of house in the very spot where it is; it couldn't

be more perfect for my own requirements, and I always hate to leave it and long to get back to it. And yet there is nothing expensive about any part of it. It has windows and much sunlight, and it is always filled with flowers. It has one discomfort—its hot-water system is an unending vexation; but, barring the difficulty (and cost) of hot water and an occasional atmosphere of cellarless coldness, the house has no flaws! It has brass plumbing-pipes and plenty of small but pretty and comfortable bathrooms. Its only bits of extravagance—meaning details that could have been much cheaper—are the stairs and the front door.

The painting throughout was not much more than an effect and a promise, but the papers are sun-fast; the most expensive ones, as it happened, are those in the servants' rooms, and the only enamel paint is in the kitchen and the pantry. The floors are all painted and waxed, the rugs (except in the hall and living-room) are clearflax, and a lot of small hook-rugs. The hall-carpet and stair-runner are velvet, which is all wrong; but I could get the right color in no other make, and color is to me always of first importance.

In most of the rooms a few nice or genuinely old things are mixed with things of no value at all. In the room shown in Plate 50, the mantel is a genuine earliest-nineteenth-century example, but the mirror over it is one which, when I bought it, was new and shiny; I left it out in the sun and rain and snow a whole winter—and faked its antiquity. The ship prints are mixed; three are good, two are quaint, and one is poor, but they all are much the same in color and look well enough together. The model of a New Bedford whaler in the window, Plate 46, had an accident just before the photograph was taken. I caught my sleeve in the rigging and it crashed to the floor, broke off the bowsprit (which may be seen hanging), broke the tops of both masts, and just about wrecked it!

The desk in Plate 33 is an old one of pear-wood, and the ship picture over it one of the good ones, and the mirror very nice. The glass bowl for flowers was fifty cents. The candle-

sticks of brass with bells were bought at auction. The lamp cost very few dollars, the inkstand fifty cents, the pen-tray a like amount—at auction—and the shot to hold pens is in a glass of no value. New pens and clips are on a small octagonal egg-plant glass dish, meant to be an ash-tray; the paper cutter is amber, and the stamp-box silver. The curtain hold-backs are modern reproductions in egg-plant-purple glass. The chair is a modern copy of a Hitchcock armchair.

The French chairs, covered with genuine Norman petticoat material, are nice ones, and the bowl for flowers on the end of the sofa (Plate 50), and another at the end of a long table are Lowestoft and about the best things in the room. The rug is a plain sand-colored Scotch wool; the ship-rug in front of the mantel is a "make" by myself.

The big armchair is of most comfortable deep-spring upholstery, but it was covered with such a dingy imitation tapestry, and was so enormous in size, that I bought a pair of them at auction for seven dollars apiece. I cut off the legs and hid the ugliness of the tapestry under slip-covers. The sofa was bought for fifty-odd dollars at a sale in a New York department store noted (and justly) for the value it gives. It was marked down because its covering had faded. Its covering was of no importance, since I should have slip-covered it anyway to match the room.

Almost any upholstered furniture that is comfortable is satisfactory, because it can be slip-covered. Wood furniture must be good—or at least not offensive in outline. There are a thousand things that can be faked until such time as you can buy—or find—worth-while pay-fors. The lamp-shade over in the corner at the wall end of the sofa is merely one of those sold at every art material counter—of plain manila paper bound top and bottom with gold braid. Colored prints are cut out and pasted on, and shellacked; the gold braid is covered with taffeta ribbon.

The lamp-shade on the desk, Plate 46, is the same thing, bound with ribbon and with a little print pasted on. The

chest of drawers over in the corner behind the sofa was made by a local carpenter and lacquered red, with lines around the drawers and a decorated Chinese design in gold across the top drawer and on the sides. The gold outlining is very much rubbed off and does not show half as much actually as in the photograph, which accentuates the contrast. It was made solely as an object of convenience—with sixteen drawers, each intended to hold two stacks of typewriting paper or manuscript.

Having said, earlier in this chapter, that painting, dyeing, and slip-covering were of greatest value in producing beauty at least expense, I offered a few suggestions for painting, but not a word about dyeing or slip-covering. Therefore, some practical suggestions here.

HOW TO DYE THINGS AT HOME

Dyeing in the ordinary sense is dipping material into dye —which usually means sending it to the dyers. In many cases, however, it is possible to dye things at home, with a brush instead of going through the usual laundry process of wetting, and drying, and manipulating to prevent streaking, and then ironing. Personally, I cannot qualify as a laundress, and my own part in any dipping-into-dye process goes no further than the mixing of the color and trying out a sample. But the brush process I have done myself, time and again.

You simply mix dye as you would mix paint. Take a very wide paint-brush or a sponge (in this case wear rubber gloves), and then put the dye on as though it were paint. You can do rugs, carpets such as Brussels, and clearflax floor-coverings. You can tone down violent colors with dye, or with coffee. You can pin material out on long planks—first putting blotting-paper or old sheets or something under the goods to absorb any excess of liquid—and simply paint the dye on. This is especially good for any material that should not—or can not—be wrung out.

Straw porch-rugs can be painted. So can awnings. Painted awnings do not pull up and down very well, but for those that are left down, painting is perfectly satisfactory. I have had them done time and again. Dye would not do except for loss of color.

HOW TO MAKE SLIP-COVERS

Slip-covers, which are so unreasonably expensive when made by certain decorators or by certain stores, are so easy to make at home that anyone who can fit the shoulders of a child's dress or put in a pair of sleeves could not possibly have any difficulty.

There are three ways of making slip-covers. The professional and hardest way is to sew the seams on the wrong side and set a cord-filled piping between. The second way is to fit them on the wrong side, then sew the seams about three-eighths of an inch nearer the edge than the basting, and turn right side out and sew a French seam. The French seam goes right side out to give the effect of cording.

But the third, and much the easiest way, is to fit the seams on the right side and sew them as fitted on the right side. After they are sewn on the machine, cut the seams evenly close—about three-eighths of an inch—and bind with tape or organdie binding—the sort that is folded and pressed and for sale in every village or city dry-goods store. The latter is easier to put on smoothly, better looking and likely to wear perfectly if the slip-covers are not constantly laundered. Begin by cutting your material in short lengths—the *right* lengths—with pattern centered on chair or sofa-back and seat. For a sofa, seam the material in sufficient width before fitting. Pin to the furniture and cut wide edges roughly (Fig. 137), then pin each seam exactly over the upholstery ones underneath. Where there is a pleat or a set-in piece in the upholstery, make the same pleats or set-in pieces in the slip-cover. Pin all the seams exactly as you would fit a shoulder seam. The object is to fit close enough to be smooth,

but *not* tight. Make little pleats where the edge of the material stands loose, or snip in the angles that draw tight, exactly as you snip armholes for sleeve-joining. Be sure to tuck plenty of material in around the edges of the seat at back and sides of arms to allow for the play of the springs. The trick of good slip-covers is to have them as loose as possible without wrinkling.

Fig. 137
SEW ON THE DOTTED LINE

If you want to pipe the seams, the way that is easiest—for me—is to pin the material securely to the chair (or sofa) about an inch inside of the seams, and then to baste the piping to one side of the material precisely on the line of the seam, and then pin the joining material exactly along the basting.

Good slip-covers have a box-pleating for a finish at the bottom. But those in a very simple house can be left plain and finished with gimp or narrow fringe.

LINED CURTAINS

Ready-made glass curtains are so inexpensive that unless you want some that are very unusual, they are really not worth the time spent in making them at home. Making heavy curtains that are unlined is too easy even to describe. But lined ones have a mysterious tendency to bag. Only the professionally expert can manipulate the top hem and adjust the stretchability of material and lining. *But*, there is a trick: Simply leave the curtains disconnected at the bottom by hemming material and lining separately, and they will hang beautifully.

INEXPENSIVE FLOOR-COVERINGS

The one advantage—economically—of Eastern rugs is that they wear for ever and ever, and never tell anything. A plain velvet carpet attracts your attention to every foot-mark, and never recovers from anything spilled on it. Other surfaces, such as the Scotch wool rugs, wear very well. There is a carpeting that resembles a very coarse Brussels: it is cheap and good-looking for a country house.

Clearflax rugs come in excellent colors and are entirely suitable in simple country cottages. For houses of greater importance, plain neutral-colored velvets are best. Worsted velvet is most durable—and most expensive.

Oriental rugs of exquisite softness are within buying power of none but deep purses; Oriental rugs of medium price, or domestic rugs of Oriental design, are usually kaleidoscopic horrors of blatant restlessness—unless you dye them to keep them quiet.

THE QUALITY OF APPEAL

If a house lack appeal, it may be because the furniture suggests discomfort. A chair standing by itself, over toward a corner, without daylight, lamp-light, or a table near it, is uncomfortable to sit in, and looks it! Furniture with its back turned to the entering guest is never inviting. How can it be? Neither is any arrangement that is inconvenient.

But never let yourself believe that your house is unappealing because you are not rich! Such a reason is nonsense—unless you are not only poor as poverty, but helplessly incompetent as well. Without a cent to spend on materials, you can do nothing; that is true. But the waste of dollars upon dollars by those who spend ignorantly is the outstanding cause of an ugly home.

In fact, how many rooms can you count, in the houses of the very rich, that you envy? Personally, I can remember only one house that ever made me think, "Yes, it might be

wonderful to be very, very rich and own such beauty as this!" On many occasions I have thought it might be pleasant to choose certain things—oh, yes! The woodwork of a room, perhaps; a picture here, an ornament there, a piece of furniture—but the whole possession complete—never but once.

WHY HAVE VERY RICH MEN'S HOUSES SO LITTLE CHARM?

My own answer to this question is: Perhaps because color is of paramount importance, and the typical palatial rooms are characteristically submerged in monotones of gold and brown and raw sienna! I often wonder whose pulses are really stirred by yellow-veined marble walls embellished with gold, and hung with huge tapestries depicting colossal nymphs and satyrs in deeper greens and tans, or with heavy gold-framed paintings of religious subjects that impel one to speak in whispers as though in church. How personal is the appeal of great urn-shaped vases on ponderously ornamented consoles, or on a caryatid-supported mantel? How much can anyone enjoy sitting on a titanic throne chair with heavily nubbined back that is bruising to spine and skull to lean against? How can one choose to dwell in a room with three-times-curtained windows, or in the dim twilight of enshrouding amber lights barely strong enough to reveal a priceless porcelain lamp-base, or a heavily ornate appliqué? If the room be a library, the chances are that there is not a book in all the parading rows of gold-tooled bindings that individually invites you to take it down, no gleam of light to read it by if you did.

Of course, if you like the gloom of grandeur—or the grandeur of gloom—that is all right. But give me instead, any day, a room with casement windows—attic ones will do—with a view of trees, or even of chimney-pots, with flowers growing on the window-sill, a big plain unencumbered table to write on, a sofa to sit or lie down on, a piece of furniture with plenty of drawers to hold papers, a few comfortable

chairs for friends, an open fire, plenty of light, flowers for ornament, and lots of books. What more could one ask?

FAKED BINDINGS FOR DECORATION

Speaking of books in an attic reminds me of a pet fake that might be useful to some one. A long while ago we built a huge new library with yards upon yards of yawning shelves to fill. Up in the attic were countless discarded, odd-backed books. The room was much too good for mixed-back junk, and shabby at that. But we had a fake idea: We went to a manufacturer of book-binding materials, and bought a lot of different surfaces in red, of many shades, a considerable amount of blue, a lot of calf-skin and leatheret, and covered almost a thousand books. Covering was easy. The snag was writing labels! Some of them we wrote on a typewriter with a black ribbon on variously tinted papers that come in little packages at stationery stores; but for most of the labels we used gold paper, and printed the titles by hand in sepia ink.

The label-printing is a snag because, unless the shelves are high or distant, it is very difficult to hide the fact that they are neither stamped nor printed. The one of us who could really letter did a hundred or so, but the rest were pretty bad. Typewriting was the next best, and would be very good if you had—or could borrow—several machines, so as to vary the size of the lettering. Or if you have very many books to do, it might be worth buying a toy printing-press. To have a printer make them is apt to swell the cost out of all proportion, since the type has to be reset for each book.

All this, of course, is not a treatise on how to cover old books that are half-way presentable, but merely a suggestion whereby a lot of old ragamuffin novels can help to furnish shelves and even add the ever-essential becomingness of color.

If you choose to take pains, you can do really attractive

books in passable bindings. The best way is to cut the cover as shown in Figure 138. Glue the cover all around the edge, and paste it to the inside covers of the book. Push the glued flaps A-A over the ends of the back between the back and the binding. Then paste a thin lining-paper over the inside cover, and the book is practically rebound. But in doing a great number of books that are to be used temporarily, an ordinary jacket like that on every new book will answer sufficiently well.

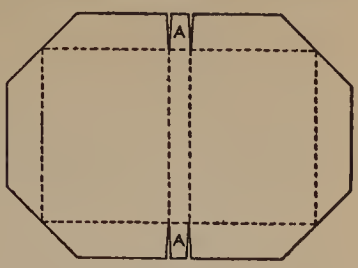


Fig. 138
HOW TO CUT A BOOK-COVER

When we covered our books, we bound the ones we really liked in the way described, with gold labels and sometimes small cut-out gold designs, and put red jackets, blue jackets, and tan jackets on the others, which were temporary fill-shelves only.

EXTRAVAGANT ECONOMIES IN BUILDING

To the not-rich builders of a new house, the following warnings are offered:

No extravagance is more reckless than skimping on the structural details of your house. This does not mean that you must build a fireproof building at seventy-five cents or a dollar a cubic foot, but merely that a house should be sound at core—unless you are prepared to pay for it time and time over in repairs and replacements.

On the other hand, to be told by the builder that a steel and stone and copper building is the wisest construction to choose, is very much the same as being told that it is wiser to buy diamonds instead of glass, because diamonds wear better. Most of us cannot pay for such construction except by sacrificing other things—space, for instance, and other essentials to comfort.

If this be the case—if you cannot build a stone or brick

house without sacrificing space and comfort and money left for furnishing—it could hardly be as satisfactory in result as a house of stucco, or possibly of wood. But whatever type of house you do build, build it structurally well.

Skimped building is not an outlay of least expense; it is money thrown away on something that is worthless. By skimped building is meant the using of unseasoned lumber, badly mixed and badly formed cement, iron piping, tin flashings, vile-looking roofing, no insulation, and inconvenience of plan. Do not overlook or give up, as extravagances, any details of comfort. The place to economize, if you must economize, is on trimming. If necessary, leave parts of the house to be finished little by little. Depend upon comfort and color for beautification, and then perhaps gradually, as you are able, add embellishment that counts. Of, if the house is to be finished at once, choose the things that are to you essential, and see that they are not among the things absent-mindedly omitted.

Where I would economize, you will perhaps not. Details that I care nothing about may be of consequence to you. For example, tiles in the kitchen, tiles in the bathrooms, or hard-wood floors and trim, mean less than nothing to me. In a little house such as my own in Massachusetts, they are not even suitable. In a town house or a certain style of important country house, bathrooms—kitchens, too—are tiled. Personally, I like other walls better than tiles. A velvet carpet entirely hiding the floor is the only antidote I know of to cure the hospital effect of the typical white-tiled bathroom. Tile walls for kitchens are very practical, but it is absolutely necessary to lay cork or other flooring over marble or tile in kitchen and pantry. (See Index.)

Hard-wood trim throughout the house is best for quality, but unpainted it is often the stumbling-block of charm in furnishing.

There are many items that are senseless extravagance for one who must economize. If you have plenty of money—and like that sort of house—then go ahead and choose all the

gables and dormers, and bays and irregularities that spread all over the lot. But if money is important, it is merest common sense to remember that every irregularity, and every object that is not of stock size and pattern, helps the expense to mount like a taximeter and quite likely adds not one iota of comfort.

You may not like a square-box wooden house, and there is no reason why you should build what you do not like—*except* that, with a given amount of money, you can have bigger rooms, more of them, and many other compensating details of plan and furnishing, at the cost of a small stark-empty irregularity of steel and stone.

WORTH-WHILE EXPENDITURES

For a frame house, asbestos shingles of best quality are better than wood ones, if they can be afforded. But bad-quality composition roofing is not only cheap-looking, but cheapening to the value of your property. A beautiful made-to-order front door and a beautiful stairway are two things that are worth having if possible. Brass piping for plumbing is essential for most climates and for water that contains iron. Copper valleys in the roof are wise if the price be possible, otherwise zinc will do. But tin means that sooner or later leaks will come through, and the repairing expense will be twice the cost of the original difference between tin and zinc, or even copper.

Have your chimneys waterproofed when built—especially those that run up on the outside of the house. It is not an expensive process, and it will prevent damp walls and even save you from standing dishpans in the fireplace every time it rains!

ONE LAST WORD

Remember that the house we love to go into—and the house we love to stay in—is not necessarily the house of greatest splendor. It is, however, the house of a hostess who

knows how to make her guests comfortable and how to make their sorroundings pleasing in color, and friendly in arrangement.

When furnishing your own house, therefore, be sure, first of all, that the colors are harmonious, that the chairs are restful to sit on, that writing-tables are well equipped, that lighting is perfection for whatever purpose it is intended. Remember, too—if you live in the country—that no ornaments are so beautifying as flowers; garden flowers, wild flowers—any flowers!

If you have house-guests, be sure that every detail for their comfort has been thought of. Be sure that dressing-mirrors are perfect for a woman to see herself full length and to do her hair by, or for a man to shave by. Be sure that the shaving-mirror is of adjustable height. Remember that a guest may be less than five feet two or over six feet four—and that adjustment for one will mean standing on a chair or kneeling on the floor for the other! Also remember a hook for a razor-strop.

Be sure that beds are really good, and that the sheets are long—even if lengthened at the foot with unbleached muslin so that they can be tucked a full half yard under the matress—and will not pull up the moment your guest lies down in bed. If you would have a house of charm, you must think of every possible detail. Put yourself in the place of a guest or a visitor, and look at your house and its equipment from the point of view of every type of friend you can imagine, and with every faculty you can muster.

Walk up to your front door, and look at it critically: Is it inviting? Is it neat? Is everything about it shining? Is its brass—or nickel—polished like a looking-glass? Does the door open properly? Is the hall neat? Does the furniture in the sitting-room suggest that you sit down, or does it turn its back? Does the room look cheerful, does it seem friendly? Are there lots of flowers? If not, is it because no one took the trouble to pick them? Or is it because flowers are out of season? In this case, could no plants have been saved from

the garden? Could nothing green or flowering have been bought or grown?

Stand on the threshold of the room in which you receive your friends and imagine yourself one of them: In which chair would you be inclined to sit? Why? Are other chairs uninviting? Why? Couldn't you make them look comfortable? Have you ever tried?

If you play bridge, can all four players see their cards, and those laid on the table, without blinding reflection of light?

Questions of "Why is this detail effective?" and "Why is that one somehow wrong?" are asked again and again by every woman who has learned the art of perfect arrangement—the art, in short, of exercising thought, ingenuity, and imagination.

A house of outstanding beauty—meaning value—plus the qualities enumerated, is perfection, of course. But a house without very much intrinsic value, which yet has the quality of comfort that impels you to make yourself at home in it, possesses the one quality that is the very essence of inviting charm.

XX

THE LITTLE HOUSE OF COMFORT AND CONVENIENCE

A LITTLE simple house can much more easily have personality and charm than a great one—for many reasons. One reason is that the bigger and more imposing the house, the more surely does it challenge criticism. You pounce instinctively upon whatever shortcomings you discover, because anything that pretends to conspicuous perfection is not only exacting but puts you on your mettle to prove your own qualification as a connoisseur, if only to yourself! Your impulse, in other words, is to go flaw-hunting; whereas, in the little house that pretends to nothing, you go merit-collecting instead.

"How sweet! How charming! How *comfortable!*" (This last with emphasis.) "How you must love it!"

You beam at the owner, and the owner enthuses, "Oh, we do!"

And then she shows you all the details that might escape your notice—especially the tricks of comfort of her own devising. You are surprised at unexpected doors that lead to unexpected spaces; the blind-sliding panel, for instance, that is deep enough for a rack of linen poles that pull out from the dining-room wall at the back of the circular stairway; and another panel opening that is square and flat and just big enough to hold a bridge-table; the yawning door that takes in the whole lower half of a corner cupboard, including the normal doors and an apparent shelf of books that is merely a trimming of book-racks, arranged to make space enough for a radio and loud-speaker below it.

You are enchanted as a child with the unsuspected stairs that let down magically between the open rafters of an

WALLS LEMONISH CREAM, SLIP-COVERS BLUE-GREEN WITH FLOWER DESIGN, NOTABLE EARLY NINETEENTH-CENTURY MANTEL

[PLATE 50]

William F. Dominick, Architect

A FLAGGED AND FLOWER-BORDERED PATHWAY GIVES CHARM TO THE LITTLEST HOUSE

[PLATE 51]

out-building study ceiling leading to a bachelor guest-room and bath above. You enthuse and the owner enthuses and the little house loses nothing by this double enthusiasm.

Perhaps, moreover, you are thinking of building, and have therefore been measuring various big and little rooms. You know that the Jones's living-room is as big as the ground-floor of your whole house. You know that the Smiths' living-room is so small that you have to thread your way between the meager furnishing. You have perhaps been feeling discouraged at the inevitable discomfort of rooms as small of those of the Smiths. In fact, you wonder whether attempting to build is wise. This house of delectability is just what you want. It has the unexacting character of a little house, but it is big enough for comfort. You get out your tape-measure and your note-book (which every prospective house-builder inevitably carries), and find to your amazement that the room you think so comfortable has the same floor-space exactly as the impossible small Smith one! "The measures must be wrong!" You look at the owner blankly. The owner laughs: "An effect of size is often as not just a trick—easy enough when you know how the trick is done!"

HOW LITTLE ROOMS ARE MADE TO SEEM BIG

In this chapter, therefore, let us not only explain a few tricks of illusion, but let us also make a list of space-saving methods which are perfectly simple examples of primary-grade arithmetic, but to which countless owners of little houses pay no attention.

In the first place, the plan—upon which depends the arrangement of the furniture, is of utmost importance. Many doors—especially double ones—make a small room smaller, because the floor space is turned into cross-roads. Hence Rule One: The smaller the room, the fewer and smaller the doors; but, on the other hand, the more and wider the windows the better. Windows on three sides—casement windows at that—

give a room the appearance of being a third larger than a room with windows at the narrow end.

In the plan shown in Figure 124, which is that of the living-room illustrated in Plate 50, the room without any tricks of decoration has the comfort as well as the effect of a considerably larger room. Why? Because the many windows give the illusion of breaking the walls out into the views of the garden, or to the width of the awning. Also very space-saving is the fact that the doors are both at the windowless end of the room—and at the *same* end. If the window beyond the sofa were a door, the room would be a passageway and its present furnishing unfeasible. As it is, there is an effect of much floor space, which greatly increases the impression of comfortable size. And the fact that the windows are opposite the door permits the sofa and principal chairs to face the entrance and welcome whoever enters.

Every arrangement that blockades one's entrance into a room is bad. Moreover, furniture so placed that you have to thread your way between it, gives an impression of cramped discomfort. The ill-mannered fireplace blockade (Fig. 111) on page 321 is probably the most space-destroying arrangement of furniture possible.

Essential to the beauty of a small room is furniture that is small in scale. This does not mean that chairs or sofas must be so small that they are uncomfortable, but that they must not be larger than necessary to comfort. Huge widths of backs and arms, and, as already noted, pieces of wooden furniture that are as thick through as packing crates, would clog a moderate space completely.

TRICKS OF SCALE

There are two tricks whereby big furniture can sometimes be made to fit easily in small rooms. The first is cutting it thin, as noted in the preceding chapter; the second is cutting it low. For example, the big chair at the right of the fire in Plate 50 would have been impossible to fit into the

room were it not for the trick of cutting off its legs. Big pieces of upholstery lose their effect of size very surprisingly if cut low to the floor.

In this same room are a number of tricks of scale made necessary by the lowness of the ceiling. The ceiling is only seven feet three, and the room is three inches less than fourteen feet wide by twenty-three feet long. Unless the furniture were very low, it would look much too big for the size as well as the height of the room.

On the other hand, in this same room the windows are set uncomfortably low, and unless disguised would bring the ceiling still lower. The windows are, therefore, heightened by the trick of putting a five-inch board above each window-frame, with a lambrequin fastened to a shelf-board that is attached to the top of the five-inch board. The shades and glass-curtains are fastened several inches above the actual top of the window-trim. The shades are always pulled down far enough to seem to cover a row of upper panes of glass. Why this make-believe upper row is not a dark space, I don't know; but light from the window is reflected on the shade, and the lack of panes is unnoticeable.

The extreme fineness of the mantel detail reduces the effect of weight, which counteracts the effect of size. Moreover, in old Colonial houses, the mantels used to be enormous, so that a very big fireplace opening is suitable to the type of house. The chimney was built on the outside of the house to avoid cutting into the room; but this was actual space-saving, and not a trick. A trick, in the present sense, is something that appears to add—or to take away from—height or width. Height is added to a room of more elaborate type by a cove-cornice painted the color of the wall (Plate 35), or by any cornice that encroaches on the ceiling and continues the color of the walls. (Plate 26.) The reverse trick of carrying the ceiling down to the picture-molding is used to lower height.

The best illusion of size is, of course, produced by mirrors. The wider they are, and the more like windows or

doors or whole wall-panels, the better. Be careful, however, of lining foyers or small rooms with solid mirror-walls, because the result will be a bewildering—and far from appealing—maze.

An effective and inexpensive use of mirror-doors is to cover the ordinary wooden doors with small panes of looking-glass held in place with mitered horizontal and vertical strips of half-inch, half-round molding. Be sure that the glass covers the entire door to within a quarter of an inch of the edge. In a cottage type of house, a poor quality of glass gives a much quainter and prettier effect than glass which is good—one of the many instances where cost does not mean esthetic value. (Never use machine-cut beveled glass if you would produce a decorative effect of quality or charm.) The cost of a door of this sort varies according to cost of labor, but averages between fifteen and thirty dollars. Engraved glass, and glass decorated before it is silvered, are examples of cost that can also be examples of beauty—depending, of course, on what the design is, and how it is used.

Another deception of size is the panoramic one of a scenic paper such as is shown in Plate 39, or any similar decoration that has a deep perspective in its drawing. A flat design, such as the one on the hall in Plate 16, which is without perspective, neither increases nor decreases the effect of space. All types of perspective decoration, including painted niches, are tricks, which create an illusion of space that does not exist. Real niches, embrasures, or set-in bookcases add space that is actual.

A certain effect of space is added by color. Very light blue or green walls make a room seem much bigger than walls that are red or dark orange. A room painted light yellow of a slightly greenish cast looks larger than one which is light yellow with an orange cast. The lighter the color, the larger the effect, of course. A pink room is supposed to look smaller than a blue room, but this has never been apparent to me—probably because the pink is apt to be of very high

value—flesh color, most likely. Pink wall-papers are often deep, but pink paint of depth is unendurable; and blue that is not much deeper than blue-white is equally unendurable. The pink of the moment is pale apricot or peach.

So much for the effects of space produced by color. Apart from these, the nature of the decorations, the location of the windows, the providing of a central unit of floor-space by proper arrangement of the furniture, are all genuine adjustments and utilities of space, upon which the beauty of a little house depends.

Each type of house has its advantages and its failings. The advantages of every little house include the enthusiasm with which its comfort is acclaimed and the facility with which it may be made attractive because of its lack of exactions. Its only disadvantage is its lack of room and its accompanying discomfort, because there is no place to put anything. Moreover, a single object out of place puts the whole room out of order. One can be comfortable in very small quarters only if there be storage space for everything that has to be put away. In other words, a small room with big closet-space is comfortable, whereas a bigger room with nowhere but on the floor to put anything is thoroughly uncomfortable.

WASTE SPACE IS EVIDENCE OF A BAD ARCHITECT

Although in a house of size economy of space is of less importance than in a small one, waste space never proclaims a good plan. In a small house—and still more emphatically in a small apartment—the economical use of every inch of space is an exacting mathematical problem; a problem not only for the architect to solve on general principles, but for an owner of ingenuity to study personally and particularly. And the smaller the house the more personal and particular must the study and ingenuity be.

In apartment houses, especially those having several apartments on a floor, the smallest or "remnant" apartment is

often fitted in between the plans for the larger ones. Or in remodeling, where least alteration of walls is of first consideration, a certain amount of makeshift space is often unavoidable. But in the plan for a house there is no possible excuse for space-wasting elbow-jointed passageways and poke-aways. No half-skilled person would pack a trunk leaving a lot of waste holes! Then neither would an architect who could possibly be considered good, do this very thing in packing rooms into a floor-plan.

On the other hand, if a little house is to be an example of perfection, the endless fitting of belongings into spaces, or the contriving of spaces for belongings, is necessarily accomplished or at least suggested by the owner. Even the most painstaking architect in the world can scarcely be supposed to measure each belonging of each member of the family, and fit it on a certain spot on such-and-such a shelf in a specified closet. But this is hardly an exaggeration of what an owner should do. To get maximum comfort out of minimum space, it is essential not only to measure the size of each closet, but to notice where the space of each is taken from, and to take pains to decide whether greater comfort would be achieved by cutting a few inches here, or adding a few inches there. A closet that won't hold what it is intended to, is useless. A closet that holds all you intend to put into it, with inches to spare, represents just that number of inches wasted—*if* these few inches can be used otherwise.

A clothes-hanger closet must be twenty-two inches deep for men's coats with average width of shoulder. A depth of twenty inches is plenty for a woman's dress-closet. A closet twenty-six inches deep is a useless waste of four inches in a man's closet, or of six inches in a woman's. Of course, if this extra width fits into a jog in the plan in such a way that it cannot be put to other use, then the unnecessary depth is of no importance. In nine cases out of ten, however, adjustment of space makes all the difference between comfort and discomfort.

Here is an instance in point: The plan shown in Figure

139 was the bathroom dress-closet arrangement of a New York apartment. I asked the architect to explain why he had left all that long tail of elbow-hitting floor-space beside the tub in the bathroom—always an awkward arrangement, and of no use whatever except to buy a rug or carpet for—and why he had to commit grand larceny on the only closet space in order to do it! He said that he thought a tub six feet long by three feet width—inside measurement—was "de luxe." What I said is of no importance. But I lost no time in drawing the space as shown in Figure 140, with the result that most of the owners who saw the rearrangement insisted upon hav-

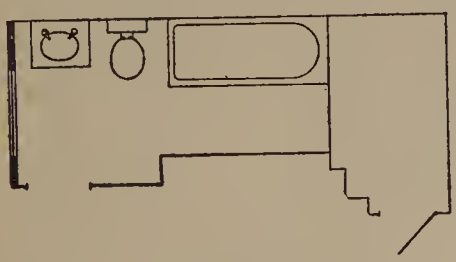


Fig. 139
DISCOMFORT

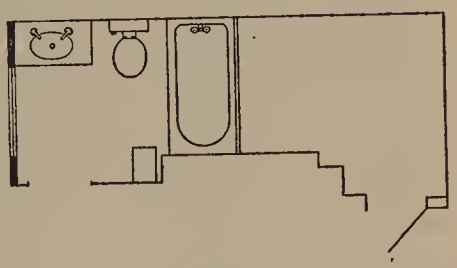


Fig. 140
COMFORT

ing theirs changed likewise—which was by that time impossible except by tearing out the wall and setting in another size and style of tub. This is given merely as an instance of the importance of really studying a plan and working out its best adjustment for yourself. Each of the owners who disliked the arrangement of a scrimped closet and a worthless tail-end bathroom had looked at the plans without noticing that three and one make four just as easily as two and two.

People who have very few clothes and very few possessions—people, in other words, who by their own expert eliminating methods avoid the accumulation of possessions that gradually submerge most of us—need but a fraction of the closet-space necessary to chronic accumulators. So perhaps it might be best to omit an attic, and omit those put-away closets which for the most part are crypts for never-to-be-looked-at treasures and never-to-be-used finery—unless the children use them to play dress-up in! But a little house with-

out enough put-away space for every-day essentials is quite another thing. So let us look to our waste inches and see which ones to save.

CLOSET MEASUREMENT IN A REALLY LITTLE HOUSE

A valuable space of seven feet by three feet by at least a foot high is thrown away under every bed, even in the house so small that closet and bureau space is lacking for the slimmest wardrobe. Yacht beds—meaning built-in beds with drawers under them—give invaluable bureau space. In a man's room, for instance, if he does not mind having his bed unusually high, space equal to that of two or three chiffoniers can easily be added without subtracting a single inch from the floor. In the tiny room shown in Plate 53, the drawers under the built-in bed are much bigger than they look, because they are thirty-five inches deep. Other available space, used by very few, is represented by the very wide and deep cupboard that can be built over and perhaps at the sides of a cross-ways bathtub. (Fig. 141.)

SPACE ROBBERY BY MOST BOOK-SHELVES

Book-shelves that are needlessly deep are inexcusable in a small-sized room, in which every quarter of an inch must be counted as precious. Wanton waste of almost a foot of room is carelessly tolerated by the unthinking owner who has the book-case space finished with lath and plaster—baseboard and all—and then has book-shelves built on the outside of that, ten or even twelve inches deep!

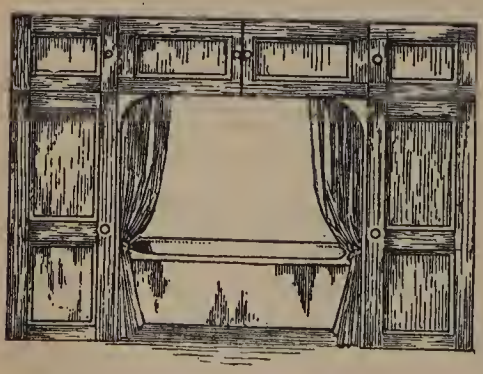


Fig. 141
WHERE TO FIND CUPBOARD SPACE IN A BATHROOM

Whether bookcases can be set into the wall or not

A COTTAGE COLONIAL BEDROOM IN GREEN AND CREAM

[PLATE 52]

HOUSE NUMBER TWO, ROOM 4—THE FOOT OF THE BED GOES FOUR INCHES BEYOND THE WALL OF THE ROOM

[PLATE 53]

depends upon what is on the other side of the wall, and what may be within the wall. One cannot cut through to the outdoors, or to the kitchen; nor can one eliminate plumbing-pipes. But in many instances, such as in the walls between rooms that need not be sound-proof, the side boards of the bookcases can perfectly well be set in the wall instead of studs. In an ordinary small frame house, this saves four inches. Four inches plus lath and plaster mean that shelves for ordinary five-and-a-half-inch books can be backed with thinnest wood or even with tin, and set flush with the wall; or that wide books need take up no more than three extra inches.

Heavier construction usually provides somewhat more width, with steel beams faced with wood. But even with

Fig. 142
AN OPEN WOOD-BOX

Fig. 143
WOOD-BOX WITH DOORS

steel and hollow-tile construction, to set big books flush with the walls in modernistic fashion means that the back of the shelf-space must jut out into the room on the other side—unless used in a space that is furred. Otherwise big books would need to be cut in half—or books for modernistic shelves would have to be printed specially on half-width pages.

To stand back of any sofa that juts out into the room, a long wood-box that serves as a table is an excellent economy. (See Fig. 142.) The box behind the sofa and on which two lamps stand in Plate 50 is built of birch, stained maple. Such a box should be almost the length of the sofa it stands behind, and be made of wood that matches the room furniture. If the back of the sofa is toward the end of the

room at which you enter, an open wood-box with logs showing is not very ornamental, though it could—if no other wood space be available—be made inconspicuous and even presentable with two cupboard-doors that hide a boxed-in wood space. (Fig. 143.)

CLOSET SPACE OR ROOM SPACE

My personal method in drawing plans for a little house or for an apartment, or for any living quarters in which space is limited, is first to plan the essential closets carefully, and then to put whatever space is left over into the rooms. The smaller the house, of course, the greater the necessity for mathematical precision in the spending of inches. You should make exact calculations by measuring the closets wherever you live. Put down the space you would *like* to have, and beside it put down the space you *must* have, and then see which "like" and which "must" fits into your plan.

A typical list of closets is given below, merely for your convenience—to be used like a laundry list. On applying this list to your own needs, you naturally cross out items that are unnecessary, and add any others that may be indispensable to you. Beginning, therefore, at the back of the house:

KITCHEN

Stores closet.
Ice-box.
Kitchen cabinet.
Screened larder.
Pot-closet.
Dresser for china and glass, with drawers for kitchen-cloths, roller-towels, and servants' dining-room table-linen.
Broom closet.
Ironing-board shut into wall, if no laundry.

PANTRY

Dressers for dining-room china and glass.
Safe (or closet) for silver.
Shelves or closet for dining-room linen.

Space for dish- and glass-towels—and a place in which to dry them.
A drawer for all items necessary for silver and brass cleaning. Brush and broom closet.
Place for a house-ladder and for breakfast-trays. The ladder can perhaps hang high on the wall somewhere; the trays fit into a slot made at the side of the dresser or at the side of the drawers under the sink.

CELLAR

Bins for coal, kindling-wood, and log-wood.
Preserve closet.
Cold but non-freezing root compartment, for storage of vegetables and garden bulbs.

SERVICE EQUIPMENT

Housemaid's closets on each floor for brooms, carpet-sweepers, vacuum-cleaners, brushes, dust-cloths, etc.
In a house of any size, a housemaid's sink on each upstairs floor, and a drain-floor closet at back entrance for servants' rain-coats, rubbers, and umbrellas.
A closet in each servants' room, at least thirty inches wide by twenty inches deep; or, if fitted at end of bed, thirty to thirty-six inches deep.

CLOTHES CLOSETS

Storage space for the family's summer clothes in winter and for winter clothes in summer.
A separate space for men's fishing and shooting equipment.
Coat-closet in the entrance hall. Separate closet for guests.
Space devised somewhere for card-tables, and for firewood and a baby-carriage.
Linen-closet on bedroom floor, necessarily measured to fit the amount of bed and bathroom linen used by each household.
Bedroom-closet space for each occupant of each room.

Wherever there is plenty of room, a big square linen-closet with shelves and cupboards on three sides is ideal. But where there is very little room, wide shallow space is usually easier to contrive than square space. In both plans on pages 98 and 100, the linen-closet is wide and shallow, and is entirely adequate. Measure your stacks of sheets and towels and be sure that the shelves will take them; sheets and bath-towels can be stacked sideways if necessary.

One detail to attend to *yourself* is to see that no unneces-

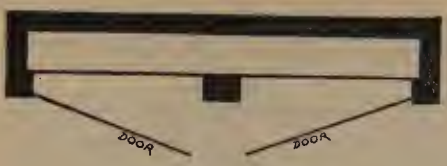


Fig. 144
FOUR INCHES WASTED

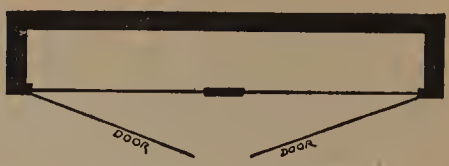


Fig. 145
FOUR INCHES SAVED

sary inches are lost on door-jambs. The way a man will build a closet, even in the littlest house, is shown in Figure 144. The way to gain four inches in the depth of the shelf is shown in Figure 145.

OTHER CLOSET DETAILS

Another linen-closet detail to be remembered is storage for extra blankets, comforters, and pillows. Usually all three are stuffed on high upper shelves where they gather dust as well as creases from June to September—sometimes the whole year through. In a big linen closet there should be regulation pillow and blanket drawers. But a shallow closet can be fitted with high—instead of deep—uniform boxes on the lowest shelf, such as those described for a box-closet. They are both tidy and dust-proof.

Bedroom closets must be provided for each occupant of each room. Such closets vary in size from one that barely holds half-a-dozen dresses, a hat or two, and two or three pairs of shoes, to the 10,000 cubic feet of space occupied by a clothes-room in a certain house at Palm Beach.

While on the subject, it might as well be noted that, in the enormous closet just mentioned, every dress or coat is hung in a numbered compartment, which also contains the hat, shoes, slippers, parasol, wrist-bag, scarf, special jewelry or other accessories worn with it. Evening dresses that are beaded or otherwise likely to be marred if hung on their shoulder-straps are laid at full length in dress-trays, and the trays are sometimes tagged with a second number which is that of a matching evening wrap. Furs are hung in a special

THE CIRCULAR STAIR IN A COLONIAL COTTAGE

[PLATE 54]

A SUCCESSFUL MIXTURE OF CRUDE MILK-BENCH, FINE TABLE, PROVENÇAL SIDE CHAIRS, HITCHCOCK ARM-CHAIRS, AND WALL-PAPER OF GAYEST YELLOW AND BLUE

[PLATE 55]

cold-storage compartment of their own that is kept automatically at proper temperature. Dozens of shelves, drawers, and trays hold underclothes, stockings, handkerchiefs and all imaginable paraphernalia of dress. The entire collection is indexed in a clothes-book, and instead of telling her maid that she will wear her red and white foularde, her red morocco slippers, and her white straw hat, Mrs. X looks in her book and says, "Bring me No. 129."

No such elaborate equipment is needed in the ordinary house, of course. The clothes-space necessary for the average woman is somewhere between that of the cupboard for six hangers and that of a small-sized room. The only way to determine the size of your closet or clothes-room is to measure your possessions. Don't imagine, for instance, that you have about ten pairs of shoes and slippers, and then find you have forty pairs and nowhere to put them! Equally foolish is it to waste space for forty—in a small house where every inch is valuable—when you need space for ten or less.

MAKING THE MOST OF CLOSET INCHES

The average fitting of the average closet, whether it be sixty inches deep or the regulation twenty-two, consists of a pole five feet three inches from the floor, and a shelf three inches above that. If the closet is of coat-hanger depth, it is sometimes wise to vary the usual arrangement of clothes-pole and shelves over it, by hanging the pole three inches from the ceiling, using long-handled coat-hangers, and filling all the space beneath your dresses (or your children's clothes or your husband's coats) with shelves. Lower shelves are much more practical and space-saving than the unreachable space above the door-frame.

There are also numerous door devices suggestive of a fitted bag. Bathroom towel-bars on the inside of a man's closet-door are perfect for ties. Shoe-racks go fairly well on a woman's closet-door, if they are not too deep, and if there are little fences at the edges to keep shoes from falling

Fig. 146
A CONVENIENT ARRANGEMENT

sideways when the door is opened or shut. Or if the closet is wide, so that the pole is longer than necessary, shoe-racks are excellent against the wall of one side.

In a man's closet, there is always room under his ordinary suits for a number of trays or shelves for shirts, shoes, and underclothes. Shelves can also be built in a section, with hanging-space left at the side for tail-coat, dressing-gowns, and ulsters. When the closet to be fitted is deep enough to walk into it, its possibilities are endless. (Fig. 146.)

In a woman's closet that is deep enough to go into, a pole seven feet from the floor, with space under it for four long flat trays to hold evening dresses, is very comfortable. For a woman (or maid) who cannot reach as high as seven feet, a broad stepping-stool with slightly spraddled legs, so that it can't possibly tip, and a hand-hole in the top of it, is practical. Up over the pole is a very good place for put-away cupboards; and the same is true of the space over the door, which most people leave unused.

Fig. 147
ADVANTAGES OF A HIGH CLOTHES-POLE

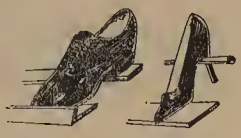


Fig. 148
SHOES CAN BE PROVIDED FOR ALMOST ANYWHERE

Shoe-racks or shelves can be fitted a dozen different ways, depending upon the shape of the closet. (Fig. 148.) Where space is deep, stand them up straight. Where space is narrow, tip them on racks. Where space is only wide enough for a ledge, stand single shoes sideways with rails, made of curtain-rods, to keep them from falling. (Fig. 149.) The cheapest spring rods, painted, look as well as any.

For a beautifully furnished closet, thin strips of painted wood molding are prettiest. But very thin wood breaks easily, and thick strips are ugly.

To use the entire coat-hanger width for a row of hats or shoes is bad planning where space is of value, because the space is wide enough for two rows. Thus a single row of hats results in a waste of space, while a double row necessitates taking off the hats at the front to find one at the back. Shoes can, of course, be set single file, one at the front and its mate behind (though in taking the back one down a number of its front neighbors usually come tumbling after). In summer, when a woman is apt to wear more hats and fewer evening dresses—of the sort best not to hang—hat-shelves over a low pole may be preferable to long evening-dress trays under it. Or the trays can be double-depth and used for hats. Shallow ones can, of course, be used for underclothes, gloves, fans—anything you choose. In fact, the sole object in closet-filling is to achieve personal comfort.

In a man's closet, shelves or trays should be measured to the exact size necessary to hold stacks of shirts, shoe-racks measured to fit the length and width of shoes. A man who is very tall, naturally needs greater lengths of space for his clothes than one who is very short.

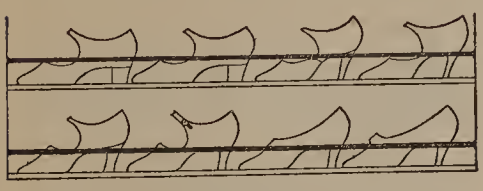


Fig. 149
ANOTHER KIND OF SHOE-RACK

Because of their stable smell, riding-clothes, even after being aired, should be

hung by themselves. The same is necessary for fishing clothes that are not put into the tub.

SPECIAL CLOSETS FOR SPECIAL USES

An essential for a house that has a refectory dining-table is a closet in which to hang table-linen. In an average small house a few small centerpieces are easily rolled around cylinders of cardboard and kept in a drawer or on a shelf. But the various embroidered and cut-work table-cloths for refectory tables should be hung if possible on poles (or slats) fitted so that they can be easily lifted out of U-shaped wooden blocks at either end. The poles must be as long as your widest refectory cloth, but for damask cloths, half their width will do, because tradition accepts a fold down the center of the table's length. Embroidered refectory cloths, on the other hand, should have no crease.

A good-sized hanging-closet is a double-doored cupboard about a foot deep and five feet wide by five feet high. In a space of such measurement, the lowest pole (or slat) is set twenty inches from the floor, and an inch from the front of the closet. This will take half a dozen table-centers a yard square or round. A second pole a foot higher, and two inches farther back than the first, will take tea-cloths a yard and a half square. The third, a foot higher and two inches farther back, will take lunch-cloths and runners. The highest, using another foot of height and two more inches of depth, will take table-cloths creased down the middle and gently folded over at half their length. The top of the cupboard must be at least six inches above the highest pole to allow of its being lifted out. Best, of course, is a cupboard with a top that hinges up. The general idea is illustrated in Figure 150.

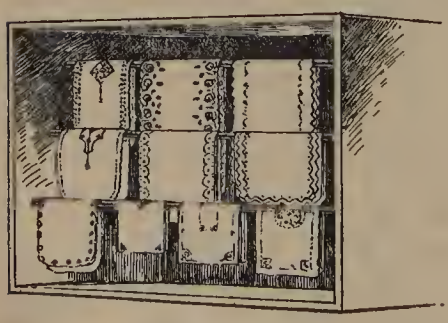


Fig. 150
CUPBOARD FOR HANGING LINEN

In a house of small equipment a single pole of whatever length necessary or available will quite possibly fill all requirements.

At all events, the only way to make each closet comfortable is to measure what you want to put in it, and then fit it in to best advantage—exactly as you would pack a bag. For the endless articles that most of us put away, a small storage-closet fitted with boxes is excellent. This is a good use for the turned-wrong closet that is narrow and deep instead of broad and shallow; its entire space is fitted from floor to top of door with shelves, and then boxes are made by any box-maker to fit them. Such boxes, covered with wall-paper, shellacked, and furnished with handles and labels, can be made as good-looking as they are convenient. In fact, a box-closet of my own that is three feet six inches deep and two and half feet wide is a display feature of the house. The door-frame is purposely set flush with the side walls, so that boxes the full width of the shelves can be pulled forward like drawers, without interference by the jamb. Six boxes are made the full shelf-size—three feet six inches by two feet five inches, and nine inches deep. The front half of each lid hinges up, so that the contents can be removed without lifting the whole box down. The two upper shelves are fitted with small boxes twenty-one by fourteen and a half inches by nine inches. The ceiling of the closet is at the height of the door. The space above the door is reached by a blind door hidden in the paneling.

A sewing-room convenience is a waist-high electric-iron outlet; also an outlet for an electric sewing-machine, and a drop-light at the window side where the maid, seamstress, or owner habitually sits. The light must be bright. The best possible light to sew by has a wide, flaring, opaque, reflector-lined shade, and is fastened with a pulley so that it can be lowered at will. A light hung high is never good, if one need to see well; and a shade that lets the light through is not as good to sew by as one that can be lowered close over one's work and adjusted so as to cast no light into one's eyes.

BLIND DOORS

Convenient in any house, but especially so in a little one, is an occasional blind door. The entrance hall, or the foyer of an apartment, for instance, is sometimes little more than a collection of doors that leave not a foot of wall space. In this event it is very practical to have one, or possibly two, made blind so that they have the value of plain wall space. In fact, a console with a picture or mirror over it or any other small piece of wall furniture can be fastened to it perfectly.

In *Etiquette,* page 420, a blind door is on the wall near the window, and a tall cabinet is fastened to it. The door opens quite as easily with the cabinet—including the ornaments on the shelves—as it would without. A blind door means merely a door that is set without trim, and whose hinges have no projections that show. On a plain wall, such as the one in the illustration just referred to, you can see its outline if you look; but on a figured wall it is almost undetectable. There are three in the hall shown in Plate 16, leading into closets. The only way they can be seen is by looking at the baseboard where V's are necessary in order to open the doors with the baseboard projection that naturally continues across the doors.

THE ROOM THAT PLAYS TWO PARTS

Where space is very valuable, it is not practical to devote a vital amount of it to a room that is less than generally useful. In thousands of small-sized houses and apartments the living-room and dining-room are, for this reason, in one. And in many otherwise perfectly appointed houses certain rooms are convertible to double use.

Most typical is the sitting-room-spare-room in a small country house or in an apartment. In such a room there is no bedroom furniture. Ideally it is a room furnished as a sitting-room with a dressing-room-bathroom off it.

If drawer space is necessary, it is easy to replace a bureau by a knee-hole desk, which is much prettier, anyway. In a house that is perfect in detail, a dressing-table is perhaps set in a panel like the one in Plate 31. But a perfectly good temporary dressing-table can be made by hanging a mirror over any sort of small stand or table put in front of the window.

A day-bed of my own invention is shown in Plate 34. It is completely comfortable both as a sofa (its normal use) or as a bed (very occasionally). It differs from the ordinary day-bed not only in that it is upholstered at the head and foot, but also in the method of its bed-making. In other words, it is not as it looks. The pleating of the slip-cover does not hide legs and empty space. Behind the pleating and flat on the floor is a deep box-spring. The mattress, which looks like sofa-springs, is shown immediately on top of the pleating. If the bed is to be used, it is made like every other bed in the morning and tightly covered with the chintz spread, after which three huge cushions are put on top of it. Feather-filled, thickly stuffed, rectangular cushions go across the back and ends, which reduce the apparent size of the seven-by-three-foot mattress. No amount of sitting on the sofa disturbs the smoothness of the bed under the cushions. At night the cushions and pillows are lifted off, the chintz spread is removed like any other day-counterpane, and bed-pillows are taken out of their boxes in the linen-closet. This room has a bathroom-dressing-room, so that it is used as a bedroom only at night.

THE ONE-ROOM APARTMENT

The one-room apartment is not what cost of space is taking us to. It has taken us. We are here! When space in New York, for instance, is literally many dollars an inch, what is one to do whose dollars are limited? One answer is, obviously, "Don't live in New York." But since people—hundreds of thousands of them, in fact—are moving into

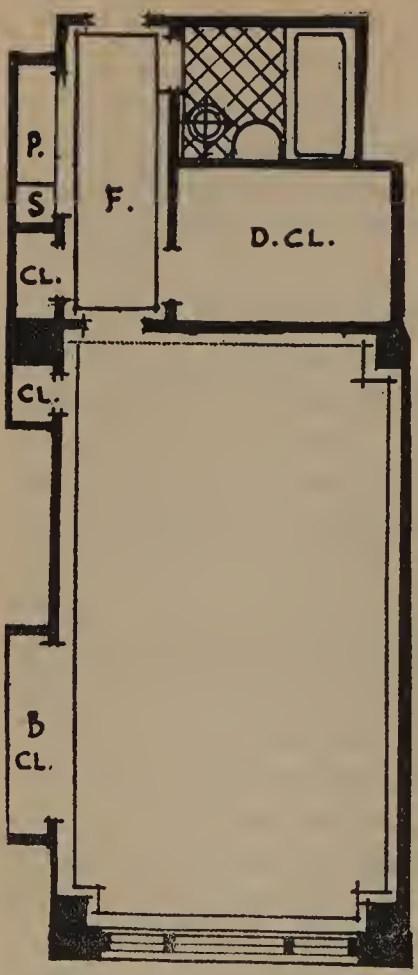


Fig. 151

ALL THE COMFORTS OF HOME IN ONE ROOM!

F.—Foyer, D. CL.—Dressing Closet, P.—Pantry, S.—Sink, B. CL.—Bed Closet, CL.—Closets.

these one-room apartments, this chapter would be incomplete if nothing were said about them.

The plan on this page (Fig. 151) shows you the idea of putting all the space available into one room of good size instead of chopping it up into cubicles. The beds are of the flop-down variety that in the daytime are stood up on end against a door and shut into a closet. The one room is furnished as a living-room and gives (when the beds are shut away) an excellent effect of space. The closet room is ample, light is abundant, and every convenience possible has been thought of.

A home in one room would be an ideal field for a modern Sheraton to exercise his ingenuity in, and devise double utility for each piece of furniture; since the one crime would be to have an air-pocket anywhere, which neither opened nor pulled out nor turned into a lever or standing it on its head.

CURTAINS

It was my intention to say much about curtains, but the magazines are so filled with suggestions for them, that there is little to add further than to warn against enshrouding drapery that obscures all light, and against overtrimming

Firm of Kenneth M. Murchison, Architects

A LITTLE HOUSE OF INVITING CHARM

[PLATE 56]

THE DRAFTING-TABLE ON WHICH THIS BOOK WAS WRITTEN

[PLATE 57]

inclined to be messy or suggestive of a textile manufacturer's display.

Glass-curtains on rods fitted with pull-cords are very good if they are of china silk or of georgette or of other material that is fairly heavy; they are good also in any room where better light than that for conversation is sometimes needed. To ask whether or not you like harlequin curtains—meaning that the material on one side of each window is of one color or design, and that on the other of another—is like asking whether or not you like the inevitable effect of remnants.

The one thing to beware of—unless you are very sure of your judgment—is the fancy curtain-pole. Ninety-nine per cent. of spear-end curtain-poles are illiterately vulgar, and the decorative value of even the one per cent. is usually questionable. There are long gilt-arrow curtain-poles in a room in the American wing in the Metropolitan Museum; they are beautifully made, with an absolutely plain shaft, and might be studied by those who are thinking of this type of curtain support. At all events the arty poles of tabu finished metal with large still artier brooch effects in the centers can not have other than the same effect on a room that ipecac is said to have on the human digestion!

One detail of curtain-hanging is perhaps important. Curtains hung in an arch must be prepared for by the architect and hung as shown in Fig. 152.

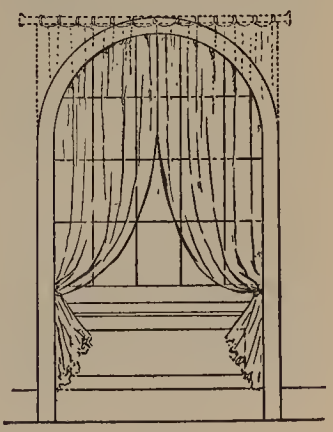


Fig. 152
CURTAIN-ROD SHOULD BE SET BEHIND ARCH

Wood lambrequins, whether applied independently or as a breakfront continuation of molding or cornice, are usually good. Brass ones are very apt to be bad. Exposed curtain-poles should be avoided by any one putting up new ones. The only excuse for curtain-poles that show is that the upholsterer has not finished his work, or that the curtains were hung

Fig. 153
LAMBREQUIN HUNG ON GLASS KNOBS

twenty years ago when decoration was at a rather out-at-ends ebb. A pretty way to hang lambrequins or curtains is to hang them on glass or brass knobs—the sort generally used for the tie-backs (Fig. 153), but smaller. Paper-covered lambrequin-boards are suitable only in a little cottage or bungalow, but the varieties of cut-out-edged or molding-trimmed wooden ones are unlimited. Painted ones are suitable in every feminine type of house. Wood window-frames, like the bed frame in Plate 53, but with fewer scrolls, are very charming for a single short, wide window in a cottage room. The curtains are hung inside the frame, of course.

Lace curtains—except of lace with a fine all-over motive or dot—belong in the category with curtain-poles. Fancy curtains, bound with colored ribbons and patterned in color, are in dangerous taste. Net, scrim, filet, chiffon, silk gauze, organdie, are all good. Chiffon curtains are prettiest, perhaps, finished with picoted points or scallops, though they are usually hemmed—either two or more inches wide or rolled to an eighth of an inch.

For a very primitive little house, straight curtains of tarletan, either white or colored, finished with a very narrow basted hem, can be lovely. In a country room, organdie curtains with deep-pointed or scalloped ruffles finished with cut-through hemstitching, are hard to excel.

For a rather important room of Georgian, French or Colonial type, very fine Brussels net, either hanging very full and straight, and finished with the narrowest Cluny edge, or else crossed over and tied back and edged with wide ruffles that are rolled instead of hemmed, are perfection. "Crossed over" means, crossed at top—as in Plate 46.

If you do a modern room in the Austrian fashion of color chiffon or silk gauze, curtains are suitable either in one color or in several colors one over the other, the thickness increas-

ing as the curtain approaches the window-frame. Several colors are hung in succession like perpendicular Neapolitan ice-cream. But if your modern room be what New York calls smart, curtains of white or silver tissue or very pale gray are your only choice—for reasons which will be told in chapter XXII.

A trick whereby a narrow window can be made to seem wide is shown in Figure 154 (further described on page 192).

Fig. 154
"WIDENING" A NARROW WINDOW

NIGHT CLOTHES FOR CURTAINS

The subject of curtains suggests a long used device of my own for keeping window curtains in a bedroom dry and clean, no matter how perishable the material or how wide the windows are opened on a dusty street or on rainy nights.

Buy 54-inch oilcloth, either matte or shiny, in whichever texture you prefer, and in the color that is the nearest match to the color of the room. Cut the 54-inch material in half, and for each curtain cut a length that will reach from above the widest opening of the window to the floor. Sew loops of tape at the two corners. Screw a hook on the window trim at the height of the loop from the floor, and at night encircle the curtains, glass and silk ones both, and hang both loops on the hook. (Fig. 155.) In the morning the oilcloth is unhooked and hung in a closet.

Fig. 155
NIGHT CLOTHES FOR CURTAINS

XXI

THE GARDEN'S DECORATION OF THE HOUSE

ONE would naturally suppose that the garden's decoration of a house would be far more appealing to a garden-lover than to one who takes green things for granted, like parsley garnishing on a platter. Yet many of those who dote on gardens as places in which flowers are made to grow—who are deeply concerned with profusion or perfection of bloom—are often the very ones who think little or nothing about gardening in its strictly decorative phase. If the roses are free from bugs and black-spot, if the irises have added to their families, why should any one bother to notice that a stark, bare building, with a garden at a distance, looks like an undressed person whose clothes are on a far-off chair; or that a haphazard drapery of vines, strung on with neither skill nor attention, is no more likely to prove an adornment than are old garments flung on a person who cares neither for style nor for becomingness.

On the other hand, a truly embellishing garden, even for a formal Period house, is much more a question of choosing the sort of garden we like than the unimaginatively conventional landscape designers would have us believe. Like the automatic interior decorator who adds two chairs with figured covering and one with stripes to every sofa and pair of chairs that are plain, the automatic landscape decorator cannot picture an Italian house without a marble-balustraded, cypress-spired garden for it to overlook; nor a house of French suggestion without a trellis-surrounded parterre. Perhaps a parterre appeals to you; in that case you are right in selecting one, though to another a carpet of close-clipped grass and neatly-patterned flowers is just about as satisfying

as a put-together jig-saw puzzle left out on a billiard table. To the English house alone does the garden expert grant a garden of unlimited appeal, whether to walk in, or to sit in, or to *live* in!

It is true, perhaps, that an austerely formal house must be embellished with a garden that is formal in general character. But even this convention, taken as an unbreakable edict, is likely to produce commonplace monotony rather than personality and charm.

THE WORD FORMAL

Do not forget, however, that it is a well-known American habit to call all sorts of things formal that are not really formal at all! In fact, when people speak of formal dinners, formal houses, formal gardens, one has no way of knowing whether they *mean* a house of architectural austerity, a ceremonial dinner, gardens such as those of the palace at Versailles, or whether they mean four neighbors in for dinner, a house that is neatly kept, a garden that has a square of grass with a semblance of balance in its planting. But, using the word in its proper sense, there is little to be said in a book such as this; because a land-owner who is going to have a genuinely formal house set in equally formal gardens is either going to employ an expert architect or is himself far too expert to need the advice of a book such as this!

To those who may be in somewhat of a quandary, however, as to how to decorate a fairly average house, the simplest and best suggestion that I know of is to go out and *really look* at it! Stand at the entrance gate, or across the street or out on the lawn—or wherever are the important places to see it from—and look at it as though it were a room to furnish, a child to buy clothes for, or a hat to trim. In fact, if you have ever trimmed hats with any degree of success, you will know that a smart result is not dependent upon the quantity or quality of trimming half so much as upon the right amount of the right embellishment put on the right place.

You will also know that although you can somewhat disguise a bad shape it is impossible to beautify a foundation of unbecoming color.

Houses of certain outlines and colors are so easy to trim that they almost trim themselves. Others are so beauty-defying that little or nothing can be done with them short of muffling them completely from ground to rooftop with blanketing vines—and even then, evidences of ugliness will probably show through.

THE PROCESS OF EXTERIOR DECORATION

The list of items which a house-owner is likely to consider is as follows:

1. *Color of House* of neutral or pastel tint. This includes all natural stone; the pale pinkish shades of brick; cream or warm gray or sand-color cement; wood that has been weathered or has been lightly stained gray, cream or fawn, or that is painted white or other color in accordance with its style. (See color of exterior, Index.)
2. *Color of Planting* chosen to harmonize with color of house. (Look at the chart of color families in Chapter X and avoid putting barricaded first cousins together.)
3. *Application of Decoration.* This must be skilful rather than lavish.
4. *A beguiling Approach* to an inviting front door.
5. *A Loggia or Terrace*—or both.
6. *An Inset of Water,* if suitable and practical.
7. *A Door-yard Garden,* or a patio or other intimate out-of-doors living room.

In addition to this list, there are two simple rules for applying decoration to the exterior of the house:

A. *Pick out whatever architectural flaws there may be, and hide them.*

B. *Pick out the features of special beauty and accentuate them.*

Fig. 156
DECORATION

Fig. 157
COVERING

A blank wall looks best with a flat-spread vine that covers one-third, or at least not more than one-half of the surface. Cut back the ends of ivy or of any clinging vine to keep it thick at the base. (Fig. 156.) To let it cover the whole surface is to destroy its decorative value. (Fig. 157.)

On the other hand, an ugly house should be thickly covered—because camouflaging it is your object.

Let us consider in detail our list of seven essentials:

THE COLOR OF THE HOUSE

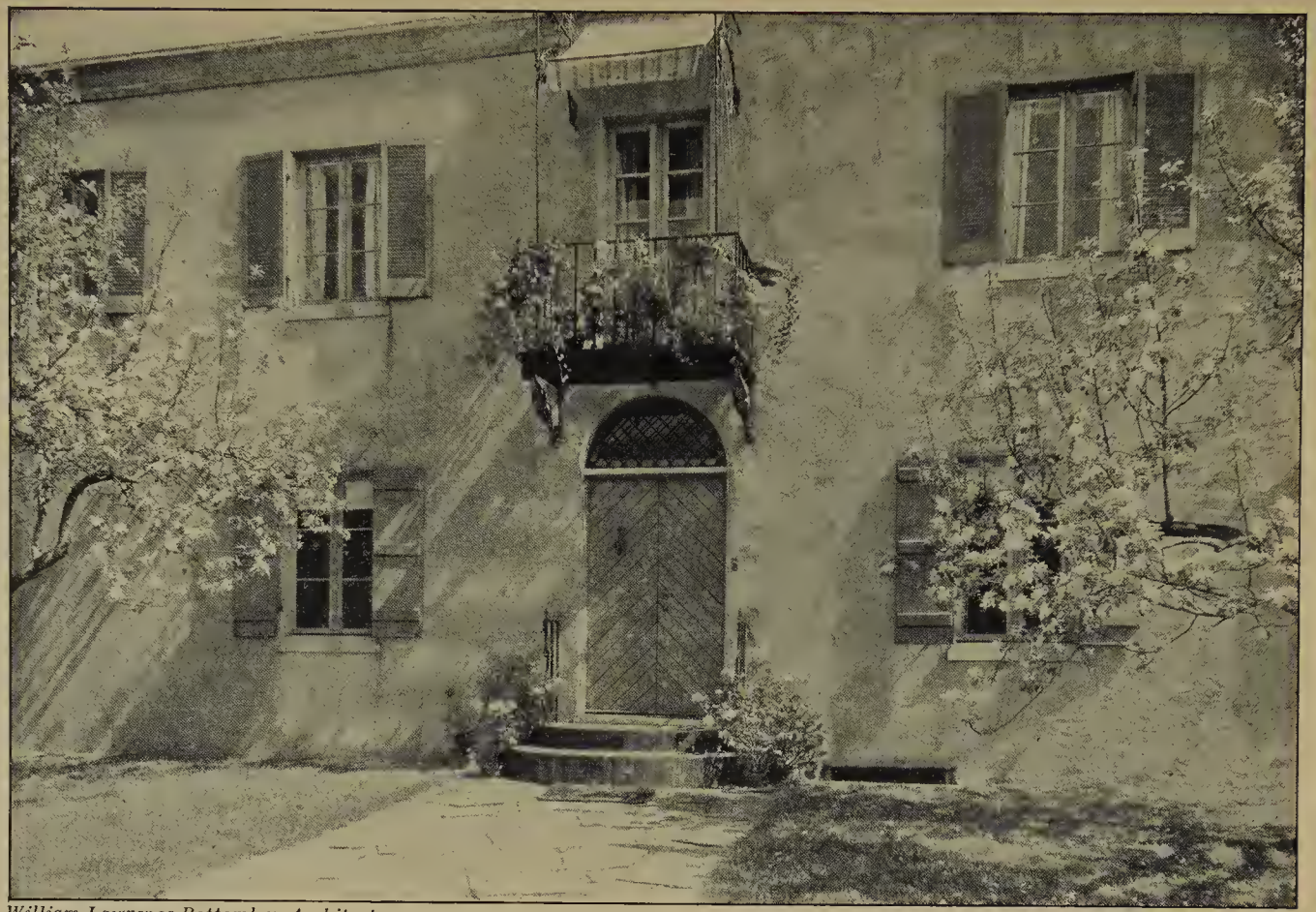
Pseudo-Gothic houses perched high off the ground (their worst fault), with overornamentation of porches and gables, and painted in various shades of maroon or pumpkin or muddy mongrel, are among the discouraging subjects for decoration. Unless a platform terrace can be built around the up-on-stilts foundations to bring them lower to the ground, there is little use in attempting to take off its overheavy nubbins or hack-saw trimming, or in making any change in its architecture except, perhaps, to paint it white or cream or oyster or sand and disguse its shortcomings as much as possible with vines.

Still more difficult (if not impossible) houses to trim without repainting are those that have contrasting horizontal bandagings, especially those banded with two contrasting colors on contrasting-patterned shingles, a third color trim, a fourth color shutters and doors, and a fifth color roof! Less offensive to taste, but equally difficult to beautify, are houses with very dark stained side-walls and glaring white

trim that rushes forward to the eye of the beholder, blotting out every planted object in its way.

The repainting and planting of one such house wrought a transformation that might be well to describe in detail. In a suburb of New York there was a nondescript cottage stained black with a scarlet brick chimney and olive-green lattice. Upon the black side-walls the white trim seemed illumined by a spot-light. It had a golden oak front door, the upper half of which was set with plate glass and had heavy guipure lace behind it. Its garden decoration consisted of a few little bushes and a fragmentary vine, and in the middle of the side-lawn was a sparsely filled bed of geraniums. The property was a replica of a hundred thousand suburban homes. It had for several years belonged to people who cut the grass and planted some geraniums, but who evidently had never thought of looking at their property as though they were looking at the composition of a picture.

Last year an artist bought the place. He painted the whole house cream—trim, chimneys and lattice to match. The gray shingle roof he left alone, but the shutters and door were painted light delphinium blue, and small panes substituted for the single plate-glass of the door and the four panes of the windows. Against the fresh light background, the hitherto unnoticed vine and plants came into focus; in fact, the rose vine, which had sprawled unnoticed on the ground, reached easily to the top of a new arbor surrounding the doorway. In place of two wooden steps, there was now a single one of stone, and below it a small front terrace paved principally with the flagstones of the former entrance walk, now broken, and the pieces set with narrow edges of sod between. Along the wall of the house was a perennial border dominated by delphiniums, hollyhocks, and asters, and at the edge of the terrace were blue tubs filled with salmon-pink geraniums, ageratum, ivy, and turquoise morning-glories. And where the round geranium-bed had been, was an iris-bordered pool, joined to the terrace with stepping-stones set into the grass.



William Lawrence Bottomley, Architect

WHEN THE GARDEN DECORATES THE HOUSE

[PLATE 58]

Ferruccio Vitale and Alfred Geiffert, Landscape Architects

THE LOVELY ENGLISH GARDEN OF A LOVELY ENGLISH HOUSE

[PLATE 59]

MAKING THE COLORS HARMONIZE

The color that you select for your house is always a question of your own preference, which may have been fixed by your choice of house or may not. Perhaps the materials of the house are brown, fawn, pinkish brick, sand, oyster or white. Against any of these neutral colors, flowers are naturally harmonious. A yellow house with a bright blue roof and patches of geraniums to supply the primary triad is the most vivid exterior decoration possible, unless it be the yellow house with a red roof and brightest possible blue flowers! Neither of these, however, is especially recommended for general choice; they are merely mentioned as examples of vividness.

The criticism of the over amount of white horizontal banding on a dark house is not intended as criticism of dark houses or even of a reasonable amount of light trim. The house of uniformly plain dark color—especially when chosen for a wooded location, and embellished with little or much unflowered green—sinks into the background in a way that is especially inviting and restful. Moreover, dark-stained houses with a light trim and shutters, if these be applied with careful relation to masses of brilliant-colored flowers, such as nasturtiums, scarlet sage, geraniums, marigolds, and golden-glow, assume an air of gaiety that is both hospitably friendly and homelike. These same Spanish colors are also becoming to all sand-colored houses with red-tiled roofs.

Very easy cottages to decorate are those which are low-to-the-ground, whether they be of stone, brick, stucco, shingles, or clapboards—either weathered or painted white. A low white farmhouse and its adjoining buildings literally smothered in bloom are as lovely as a bride with her bridesmaids. But a formal house (really formal!) must be adorned with skill and dignity or it will look like a lady of a certain age dressed as a flapper.

Therefore, if the would-be builder of an Italian villa or any other semi-palace prefers cottage gardens that are

somewhat tangled, rather than the set beds and box sculptures dear to the hearts and hands of head gardeners, let him build himself an informally rambling house of light-tinted stucco or whitewashed brick or stone, the walls of which will smilingly accept almost anything placed against them.

In the northern half of the United States, houses painted pink, sky-blue, Nile-green, violet or buttercup-yellow, have never been thought (why not?) to go very well. But these same bright colors on walls decorated with dark tropical foliage in southern latitudes are simply ravishing! And perhaps if our present enthusiasm for vivid hues is not completely snuffed out by the counteracting craze for colorless cream and brown, or gray and white and black, these most colorful façades may quite possibly be flourishing in our northern neighborhoods before long.

At all events, whatever the color of your house may be, planting that enhances its personality must be painstakingly chosen and arranged against it.

COLORS OF THE FLOWERS AND FOLIAGE

Flower borders, whether of potting plants or of perennials, can be used to transform the color of your entire garden as often as you please. But when planting shrubs and vines and most especially trees, you must choose their colors and their time of blooming for permanency.

There was a time when people who built houses of wood or stone simply planted the wood or the stone collection of vines against them. On the wooden house, a purple wistaria was inevitably started on one corner of the porch, and honeysuckle was planted against each of its supports. Bay-windows and doors were alternately garnished with crimson ramblers or Virginia creeper. If the house was of stone, it had Boston ivy vines planted a foot apart around every side of it, and its front entrance was flanked by a banking of rhododendrons. And that was that!

Planting to-day is almost as typically inclined toward

varicolored light green, dark green, yellow-green, blue-green and olive-green conifers standing out from the foundations in alternating flambeaux, spires, pyramids, balls, mushrooms, and headless terriers. Any of these may be beautiful in a moderate assortment, but all collected together suggest a group of strangers waiting for the parade to go by, or for a conveyance to take them on their way.

Wherever the need for a strong decorative accent may be, slender dark green pyramids of cypress or arbor vitæ (Douglasi) or cedar, or less formal plantings of white pine, are always successful for a house that is lived in in winter as well as summer. English ivy is beautifying as ever it was to nearly all houses of brick, stone or cement; but, as previously noted, its decorative quality is greatly enhanced if it is thickly concentrated at definite points; and where ugliness makes thick planting advisable, it is better that alternating varieties be chosen, rather than that too much of it cover the entire surfaces evenly, as though it were rough green material of which the house might be built.

Always keep the decoration of your house—the hat-trimming—in mind. It is important not to let the planting gradually change color, thin out, or grow into a meaningless jungle. It must be clipped and trimmed, perhaps replanted or thinned out, but it must at all events be watched, nursed, and trained.

CONCERNING THE APPROACH

Shall the approach to your front door appeal to the intellect or to the heart? Shall it have fat trees, a velvet lawn, plump bushes, and a serpentine driveway? Or shall it have a straight, formal approach between sentinel trees as orderly and as smartly groomed as King's guards on parade? Or shall its entrance be a road through the woods, or a lane through the fields? Either of the latter might easily be the result of skill and care, without having the appearance of being so.

It is true that with big places and long approaches we are not really concerned; but these same questions of choice

between impressive cultivation and an apparently natural rock or field or woodland fragment of land, may equally well be applied to a cottage or house set very near to the road—or to the street.

If you choose an entrance enclosure, shall it be a forecourt, or do you prefer the less important but quite easily as appealing front yard?

Correctly speaking, a forecourt is an architectural front entrance enclosure, such as is typical of the formal French or English house. Usually it is surrounded on three sides by the walls of the front façade flanked by two projecting wings, and it is walled or balustraded across the side opposite that of the entrance door. The court is usually paved, and its decoration consists of clipped trees in tubs or set into earth openings in the flagging. But whether it is walled or balustraded, whether the driveway turns within it, or whether it serves merely as an outdoor vestibule, its characteristic is extreme restraint and exact balance in decoration.

It is rather a fad of the decorators to describe as a "forecourt" any sort of front-of-the-house enclosure; more often than not, however, this is like calling a cottage a palace. Of course, you *can*, if you choose, call your front yard a forecourt and your back yard a rearcourt, and—if you build and plant it formally—its name will be correct, whether your house be a formal one or not.

To some people, the term front yard is not alluring, because it seems too suggestive of uncared-for bareness. That picture is easily repainted, however, by adding the word garden and making the ground illustrate the addition.

An entrance enclosure that is ideally suitable to almost every type of house, large or small, has either a carpet of grass with a straight path from the center of the front steps to the gate or archway in the opposite fence or wall, or else a flooring of flagstones or bricks, into openings between which are set a few small trees or balanced flower-beds edged with box. If a path leads directly from the front door to the road or street, remember that any sort of walk set low and

flower-edged has inevitable charm, whereas a paving that is high and hard and bare has none.

THE QUICKEST PLANTING THAT GROWS

Where a decorative background is urgently needed, nothing so quickly gives an old cypress-grove effect as unclipped California privet. Flowers can, moreover, be made to thrive close against its roots if you use the following method: Dig a narrow trench four feet deep, lining the entire depth of it on the front side with sheets of tin or zinc. Pack the bottom of this trench with about two feet of dressing, and on top of this a layer of loam deep enough to plant the privet in. On the front of the zinc make the flower-bed two and a half or three feet deep. Perhaps you have sometime wondered how perennial flowers can be made to thrive directly next to greedy shrub or vine roots. This is *one* way how!

In our southern latitudes the immediate decoration of a brand-new house is easily accomplished. Plant a little twig one day in California, and the next it is—a bush. But in our northern States, the hurry-up gardener's best (least costly) aids in time of bareness are poplar trees and privet bushes—the latter bought in the tallest individual plants possible, and treated as specimen shrubs. Average poplars bought of nurserymen are neither expensive nor difficult to transplant, even when they are twelve or fourteen feet high; and they contribute an immediate effect. The little ones shown in Plate 11 were only six feet high and cost fifty cents each. We had to do with these, as the season was too far advanced (June 30) to buy bigger ones; but by October they were over eight feet high and quite thick. Two rose vines have grown as high as the pilasters on either side of the door.

I would not know how to contrive the background of the garden or the decoration of a house—if cost must be considered—without privet. Evergreens are more expensive, and take a lifetime to grow. When they are little they are too little, and when they grow they are too big—and they

don't espalier half as well as privet—and espaliers are my pet trimmings! Privet is within reach of every purse, and it returns kindness with luxuriant growth in any shape and size you have in mind.

Many people think of this easily obtained and thoroughly reliable plant as suitable only to be put into two staggered rows and clipped into a hedge. What I like to do with it is to encourage it to grow into enormous specimen shrubs not unsuggestive of the cypresses of Italy. I know very well that the typical head-gardener looks upon privet as something akin to dandelions on the lawn. But if you have just an ordinary garden, or a little yard, no other shrub or tree will produce so much beauty in so short a time and at so very little cost.

The florists recommend a number of quick-growing vines, but my own best luck has ever been with Clematis paniculata and with the Dr. Van Fleet or Silver-moon rose. Feed the latter a patent pellet called "stim-u-plant," cultivate it assiduously, nearly drown it with water, and its dark glossy foliage will go over a second-story roof in three years—if it likes the exposure! In Plate 56 the rose at the left-hand corner of the house had been of ordinary seedsman-catalogue size three autumns and two summers before. The bush hidden by the tree is made of one Emily Gray and one Dr. Van Fleet grown on a trellis; these also are two summers old. The Van Fleet near my own front door (Plate 2) was just beginning its second summer.

For the decoration of the doorway of a town house that is flat on the street, and that has a cellar extending under the sidewalk, as it does in most cities, little embellishment is possible except the ubiquitous clipped plants in tubs on either side of the front steps, or two matching trees (or a row of them) set into the curb edge of the sidewalk. But if earth comes close to the foundation, any variety of vine is suitable. Grapevines and fruit-trees are unusually hospitable—rather too much so for a public street! But in a sheltered front yard or in a walled-in garden at the back or side of

the house, a grapevine such as the one in Plate 15 is very decorative. It is hard to imagine a more beautifying decoration than espaliered fruit-trees of dwarf varieties. Plums, pears, cherries—even apple trees—set out when they are young and bendable, either carefully branched in candelabra form, or merely tied flat to the walls in whatever shape the branches best take, provide floral decoration in the spring, foliage decoration throughout the summer, and more than merely decoration in the autumn. The beauty of fruit-trees against a house (though these are neither dwarfed nor espaliered) is shown in full enchantment in Plate 58.

A lean-to arbor of grapes against a side-wall, or a trellis over an end of a garden enclosure, is too well known to suggest. As a last word of advice on the subject of exterior embellishment, it will do no harm to repeat: The house of ugly outline, or with faults of detail that cannot be helped, should be covered to the utmost. But much worse than leaving the faults of a bad house glaringly in view, is smothering an outstanding example of architectural perfection. Failing to mitigate ugliness is merely failing to make something out of nothing, and can be excused; but to obliterate a work of beauty is unforgivable.

BAY-WINDOWS OR CASEMENT-WINDOWS

Decorating any bay-window is effectually accomplished by setting an evergreen at as great a distance on either side as the other windows of the façade allow. If the space is not wide, choose trees that are very narrow. For a summer-house, Lombardy poplar trees or privet tied in pyramidal form would give an excellent effect. Then in the wall space on either side of the window, and between the flanking trees, plant ivy and rose-vines, or a wistaria on one side, and on the other, ivy with a climbing everlasting pea or clematis or honeysuckle—whatever you prefer. These are to be trained up the walls and over the window—eventually. In front of them, plant low shrubs or a perennial border.

A bay-window set in under the overhang of a second story has trimming possibilities that are somewhat greater than one that stands out beyond the house, because the recess on either side of the bay-window makes a stage-setting for

Fig. 158
THE GARDEN CLOSE TO THE HOUSE

planting that has an intimacy of charm not easily attained by a roofless setting.

The exhibit of the Garden Club at Rye at the last New York Flower Show seemed impossible to excel. Pots of spring flowers stood on the window-ledge *in*-doors and added to the decoration of the *out*-doors. (Fig. 158.)

IS THERE DANGER IN EYE-CATCHING PRETTINESS?

Because the little house that verges on the picturesque is so easily made colorfully pretty, the thoughtless owner some-

times overdoes this prettiness. Sometimes only, and even then, only perhaps! But, since the countryside is peppered with Ye Old Kettle Tea-Room and Martha Washington Gift-Shop, too many small tin-awning effects and gaily painted window-boxes filled with gaily blooming flowers, Punch and Judy window-trimmings, and other attention-attracting spots of quaintness, are perhaps quite as apt to suggest commercial enterprise as the inviting atmosphere of home. This is not meant as disapproval of painted tin awnings or brightly striped window-boxes, or china cats on the roof; neither is it meant as a criticism of overabundant wrought-iron ornaments, or window-awnings that are flat on top like the tester of a four-post bed canopy, and that have pots of plants on top of them like a sing-song boat in China; nor yet of turquoise tiling set around the door, or of pot-rings fastened here, there or anywhere; it is meant merely to intimate that these embellishments should be used with regard to their digestibility by the style of the house.

In the courtyard of any simple stucco dwelling, suitable decoration might include a flower bench against the wall with potted plants on it, or potted vines set into rings beside a doorway or along the iron balustrade of stairs or balcony.

Especially becoming to a small Colonial cottage that stands on a low terrace, is a very low picket fence—a foot to a foot and a half high—set on top of a low retaining wall. On the side next the road it is rather better to plant unexacting flowers, such as asters and Shasta daisies, and small-sized hollyhocks, harebells, and native goldenrod. And on the side next the terrace it is well to plant a small annual border. The charm of planting under a low terrace-wall is illustrated in Plate 6.

Wherever rough stone steps go down into a garden, a low pot of flowers on the outer side of each step is always decorative. An old tree that has died, and whose note of decoration is needed, makes a good trellis for climbing hydrangea, ivy, or any other vine.

THE PERENNIAL FRIENDSHIP GARDEN

A friendship picking garden is an unqualified delight, because it can be a mixture if you wish, and because picking bouquets of these or those flowers is a perennially happy reminder of these or those friends. But planting friendship flowers in a border that is part of a definite color scheme is not very practical, unless your friends have an eye for color that is identical with your own; and to have a devoted neighbor rob her own garden to give you plants that shriek at your own plants and devastate your scheme of decoration, is about as unhappy a garden situation as can be found.

AN INSET OF WATER

Whether it be a building as perfect as the Taj Mahal or the latest little picture-cottage, nothing is ever quite so becoming to a building—or a garden—as its reflection mirrored in water. In composing an imaginary picture of an enchanting garden, one instinctively includes beautiful trees overhead, stone paving underfoot, and flower-pot-garnished steps going down to a little flower-bordered pool; and for those who have no fear of a wet cellar, or of babies tumbling into the water, or of mosquitoes being born by the million every hour, the pool that is brought level with and next to the house, so that its border of flowers is literally at one's feet, lends itself to unending possibilities. If the water be shallow enough, the babies cannot drown; and the embryo mosquitoes can be thoroughly discounted by serving them as meals for goldfish or by turning a hose into every hide-away crevice for a few minutes morning and evening.

A swimming-pool brought up to the north wall of a massive stone house, reflecting its shadowed somberness, has neither the decorative quality nor the allure of a swimming-pool against a light-colored, flower-trimmed house with the sunshine upon it. A fair-sized pool with planting behind it and a walk around it is practical even for the town or subur-

ban backyard—*if* the neighborhood water supply is sufficient to give you a pool permit. It is rather disconcerting to put in a pool and then find out that a water permit is limited to a

Fig. 159

THE SWIMMING POOL AS A DECORATION OF THE HOUSE

few gallons per family daily, and be forced to fill the hole with earth again! An ideal swimming pool—one as embellishing to the house as it is convenient for the members of the family who swim in it—is shown in Figure 159. In short, a more delectable or inviting close-to-the-house garden would be hard to devise.

THE OLD-FASHIONED FLOWER-GARDEN

For a small, low cottage, especially, but also for almost any type of American country or suburban house, no decoration is more friendly and gay and inviting than perennial flower-borders planted as close as possible to the front door, the side door, or, best of all, the rear door.

Our own very adorable, white-painted, green-shuttered house on the seacoast of Massachusetts, which has had much said about it in other chapters, is literally set in the middle of a flower-bed, being surrounded by perennial flower-borders on all sides—rows and rows of them! They are spread in six-foot widths in front of all the enclosing white-palinged fences; in three-foot or four-foot widths around all the walls of the house; in three-foot width on each side of the brick walk from gate to front door. Nor is this all. On the living-room side of the house, separated from the six-foot fence-borders by five-foot walks of grass, is a three-sided inner border in which dwarf fruit-trees are spaced at twenty-foot distances with tulips, iris, and gladiolas in bands between.

As soon as the tulips come up and the iris leaves declare their whereabouts, a first lot of gladiola bulbs is planted in the empty spaces. Later, when the tulips begin to wither, they are pulled up and heeled-in elsewhere for bulb ripening, and a second lot of gladiolas in groups of early and late-blooming varieties takes their place in the fruit-tree borders.

In this way, with very little trouble and almost no attention, our little house (not so *very* little, as it spreads itself out fairly far) is in much the same position as a prompter's box in the center of a stage-scene set solidly with flowers. The decorative restrictions to a rather definite color scheme keep the somewhat exuberant bloom from looking like a spilled-over paint-box. In spring, there are pink and white fruit-blossoms, lilacs (both white and purple), and tulips in deep pink, flesh pink, light purple and deep purple; also white and lemon-yellow, but no brick or bronze or scarlet or mixtures. Later, long borders of peonies are white, cream,

and every shade of pink and rose (not a single red). The tulips in the tree-borders have turned into violet, pale blue, and pale yellow iris. In the fence-borders are foxgloves, lupine, columbines, and pale yellow day lilies, supplemented later on by delphiniums, Newport-pink sweet-williams, deep purple petunias, heliotrope ten-weeks' stocks, and lemon-colored snapdragon.

Still later, these beds are dominated by phlox, lilies, and dahlias, the last-named planted somewhat like a rainbow in this order: Riverton's snow, rosebud, Jersey's beauty; Rodman Wanamaker, Wizard of Oz, Judge Moreau, Mayor Fitz, U. S. A., and Waldheim sunshine—against the end of the yellow garden of a neighbor. Along all the walls of the house facing these borders are yellow hollyhocks, delphinium, platycodon, snapdragon and heliotrope. Roses are by themselves—over the dry wells of the septic tank. (This is the one nobly shared secret in the book!) The front-path beds are massed successively with iris, delphinium, canterbury bells, gladiolas and phlox, bordered by mignonette, heliotrope and snapdragon—replaced later with pastel-colored zinnias. These last are flowers that, having started to bloom in a cold frame, may be chosen with certainty as to color.

Before leaving my own flower-borders, I want to tell brides or other novice gardeners who really care for color that it is not safe to leave last year's hollyhocks in situations where a definite color is of great importance. Every autumn I dig up all the hollyhocks against the front of the house and replace them with young plants that I have grown from bought seed. Otherwise their double yellow faces are as likely as not to turn maroon or black or red—a situation more easily forestalled than corrected after the first bloom breaks.

Perhaps all this seems too much ado about color for the average house-owner to be bothered with; but it is really not a bit more troublesome to decide on whichever color scheme you happen to like, and to grow those things only which fit into it. In my own garden I have not a single flower that verges on scarlet, sage-red, golden-glow, crimson, or magenta.

One whose taste runs, on the contrary, to the magentas, orchids, and red-purple, or to the brilliant reds, oranges, yellows, chooses seeds or plants accordingly, of course!

PICKET-FENCE CAMOUFLAGE

One problem of this seaside garden I solved after a fashion that might be useful to others who struggle to display spring flowers against the zebra striping of a white picket fence. Each spring the windows of my living-room looked out on a low green dado with dazzling perpendicular strips above it—nothing else! If I went outdoors close enough to the fence, there were lupines, columbines, iris, day lilies in profusion, but a hundred feet away the stripes camouflaged all color of bloom completely. Finally, in desperation, I took a pail of leaf-green paint and a pail of Nile-green paint, two old sponges wired to the ends of flower-stakes, and a pointed brush. Dipping the sponges alternately into the light and the dark, I made big splashes of green behind each clump of bloom. Back of the iris and lilies I painted (very roughly) a thicket of long-pointed leaves. Returning to the house, I looked out upon a garden that had suddenly burst into glorious masses of bloom! (The excitement in the neighborhood was intense, even after the method of my showmanship had been discovered.)

As a background-fence, nothing equals the split chestnut palings imported from France. I put these across the back of the garden of the neighbor's house described in Chapter VI, and also in other gardens.

In considering the subject of flower-borders one cannot very well omit the garden in monochromes of color throughout each succeeding month. In May, for instance, it is entirely white. In June it changes overnight into pink. In July, it is entirely blue. In August, it is red, and in September yellow. Any other sequence, of course, may be chosen. To have these sudden transformations of display in perpetually perfect bloom, however, is scarcely to be considered without

the aid of a staff of gardeners and unlimited footage of nursery-beds, both glassed-over and open.

THE GARDEN BROUGHT CLOSE TO THE HOUSE

Sometimes this is a door-yard flower-garden, sometimes it is a small decorated terrace, sometimes it is walled in like a patio, sometimes it surrounds a veranda or a small balcony, sometimes it is spread in front of the doors and windows of the house. The garden's type naturally depends upon the lie of the land—whether it be built on flat, sandy soil or not; whether it be in the woods or overlooking a view; whether the landscape be open or shut in; whether there be water and rocks or not. It also depends somewhat—though not very much—upon the architecture it is placed against.

But the supreme advantage of such a garden is that it is an actual part of the house, and neither a subject for its owner's display nor the objective of an enforced walk, not to say excursion. The most marvelous garden that can be seen only by wandering about in sun or wind, heat or cold, enduring the annoyance of mosquitoes or the perils of snakes, real or imaginary, is scarcely to be compared, in the matter of delight, with the garden that is brought so close to the house as to become a part of it. The real enchantment of the latter is that one may be continuously in the midst of it, whether one be sitting on the veranda or on the terrace, or merely at a window. Moreover, the beauty that it contributes to one's daily life is an asset quite apart from any enhancing exterior decoration that it may bestow.

IN CITY BACK YARDS

A little town back yard, twenty-odd feet square or less, can be made beautiful and useful in many ways, both simple and otherwise. That even a formal garden is possible in a back yard that is less than eighteen feet wide is proved in Plate 60. The apparent arcade at the rear is actually a flat

fence, upon which an architectural design of moldings, pilasters, and columns has been applied. The actual vines trained against the two small columns, seemingly midway down a long gallery, add astonishingly to the perspective illusion.

A much simpler and more informal garden is made possible by merely painting the typical high wooden fence shadowy green and planting vines or espaliered shrubs or trees against it. Or if the walls be of plain brick or stone, cut down-slanting notches or pockets here and there, pack with earth, and fill with rock plants.

Perhaps it might be well to describe another city backyard garden which serves as an outdoor breakfast-room and sitting-room through the spring, and again later in the autumn. The space is twenty-five feet wide by a little more than forty feet long. The dining-room of the house opens on an awninged terrace twelve feet square. The fence and the walls are painted green and are decorated with California privet trained flat as possible. Across the center of the back boundary is a semicircular wall of cypress, and in front of it is a small pool surrounded with ferns and grasses. Connecting the terrace with the pool is a white-pebbled path. On either side of the path are long narrow flower-borders edged with box and planted with jonquils, cottage tulips, violas, snapdragons and petunias, supplemented later by zinnias, pompon dahlias, anemones, and asters. Between the flowers and the privet are two plain panels of grass.

Although patios are properly adapted to Spanish houses and to hot climates, small garden-rooms that are enclosed and roofed over with glass during the cold months of the year are less of an extravagance, compared with the possibilities of use and decoration, than many country dwellers would seem to be aware of. (For Patios, see Chapter XIII.)

THE GARDEN'S ADORNMENT OF THE HOUSE

In the country, where beauty of prospect is unlimited, garden embellishment ranges from perfection such as that

William Lawrence Bottomley, Architect

WHAT CAN BE DONE WITH AN EIGHTEEN-FOOT CITY BACK YARD. THE VISTA THROUGH THE ARCH IS ACTUALLY FLAT

[PLATE 60]

Clarence Fowler, Landscape Architect

A NEAR-BY WOODLAND GARDEN OF ENTRANCING BEAUTY SEEN THROUGH A DOORWAY OF THE HOUSE

[PLATE 61]

shown in Plates 59 and 61 to the little pathway planting shown in Plate 51. The photograph for Plate 61 was taken from the doorway of the living-room, the view from which is merely one of many seen from other doors and windows of the house. Unfortunately, no photograph—without color—can more than faintly suggest the fairy-tale enchantment of woodland vistas and the colorful harmonies of succeeding flowers.

That a garden such as this demands expert and unremitting care is obvious. And yet one who is unversed in the art of gardening might quite easily suppose that it "just grew like that," since its seeming naturalness is one of the beautiful things about it. But that expert gardening is indispensable to the building and upkeep of an entrancing garden spot to look out upon and to live in, is not true at all. Any angle of the house will supply the situation, with background and foreground decoration of hardy vines and shrubs, and with moss left undisturbed between the flagstones. Undemanding perennials (there are many such), coming into bloom in clumps, first here and then there, need no care whatever beyond a little food, very little weeding, and only occasional, but very deep, drinks of water.

A small trough, pool, or unpretentiously trickling brook—made by setting a spigot at the top of a rocky runway—and even lovely sequences of color in near-by or surrounding borders, are within reach of each of us who will merely care enough to acquire a little knowledge, expend a little thought, and devote a little—but regular—time to their care.

XXII

THE STYLE WE KNOW AS MODERN

THE Moderns talk and write as though their revolution—their convention, their iconoclasm, their reconstruction, their return to the Stone Age, their claim of a new dimension—were as simple and as consistent as three plus three and two plus four. But to an onlooker—even a most interested onlooker—the contradictions of Modern design are more than confusing.

The gay and amusing impression is of tinsel and silver and gilt, of Christmas-tree ornament, the mirrors of Narcissus, the glass of perfume bottles, the gleaming surface of chromium steel, the flares of a thousand and one lights, toys, jazz color, glittering baguettes, and zebra skins. But then we look again, and it has all become so death-like. We feel the subconscious aftermath of the tragedy of the Great War translated into the rounded edges of highly polished, massively plain rectangles of ebon darkness, suggestive of coffins—even to the silver handles. Thick slabs of polished stone; draperies of dull white silk or chiffon, pleat on pleat; beams of light directed heavenward from high brazier-shaped lamps of alabaster repeat the suggestion of cemetery monuments and mortuary chambers.

A third example quite as clearly expresses an asylum for the insane. A theme of bars and thickly padded corners, devised so that the patients can neither escape nor hurt themselves. Chairs and tables, either built-in or so heavy that not even the strength of the demented could lift and swing them.

Fourth we note the building-block theme of every nursery. Tell a baby to build a chair or a table or a bed,

and what *must* he build—for want of building material—but the chunks of thickness that are an outstanding claim of Modernistic origin?

Fifth, there are the motives furnished by machine shops and boiler factories. Steel tubing bent in a continuous squared loop to create legless chairs; boilers sliced through lengthways and stood in corners as shields for columns of light; factory whistles projecting from ceiling beams. We also recognize the old familiar outline of the sewing machine, the ice-box, the kitchen cabinet, the butcher's meat block, the packing crate, as well as the more lately added electric dish-washer.

Sixth, we recognize the bare clean whiteness, the glass and monel metal of a hospital operating room—the patients obviously suggested by the abortive shapes of man, bird or beast.

Of course, we wonder: do any of the interpreters of these different moods believe they have achieved a finished art capable of bringing satisfaction and repose to the mature mind, to the fastidious taste? We wonder also whether the too exaggeratedly solid and rigidly geometrical outlines might not be applied camouflage of masculine strength, of scientific severity, to hide the weakness of a certain effeminate effeteness—although most of it is merely awkward and commonplace. Only in rare examples is it beautiful; and more rarely still can it by widest stretch of imagination be called homelike.

At all events, the estimate of Modern style is rather a hopeless puzzle to solve—unless we might perhaps liken the problem to a dog show at which terriers, spaniels, wolfhounds, Pekingese and Great Danes might be known by no other term than DOG.

One way to separate the much that is bad from the little (as yet) that is good, and to find out moreover what it is all about, might be to put aside these conflicting expressions and begin by separating the motives of design according to intention.

IDEALISTIC MODERNS

In the first and highest class, let us acknowledge the achievements of the idealistic Moderns. These comprise the few who combine sanity with traditional principles in their application of Modernism to practical present-day needs—the few who are accenting the use of new materials and wall treatment, new ornamental accessories, but who are clinging rather closely to established precepts in the matter of furniture outlines. It is these idealists who are producing much of interest and of beauty.

But amongst these are a certain few of those whose quest for newness is fanatical, and who therefore face a problem seemingly on a par with that of the alchemists who sought the elixir of youth—since, according to their creed, "that alone is Modern which has never been expressed before." Obviously they have far to seek for that which is utterly new. The built-in idea is not new. Cupboards, tiers of drawers, bunks, overmantels, inglenooks, sideboards, are as commonplace in old houses as feed-bins in a stable, or the shelves and counters in a grocery store. We have had many built-in periods that produced a high percentage of ugliness. Georgian, French, and Colonial cupboards and bookcases were beautiful quite apart from the fact that they were built-in.

Indirect lighting is not new. Bands of electric lights were hidden above the cornice and thrown upon the gold-leaf ceilings of hundreds of brown and gold and beige libraries of the newly rich of thirty years ago—long before the Modern mode was born in Austria.

The Egyptians used metal for furniture; so did the Greeks and Romans—though it must be acknowledged that gas-pipe as embellishment has no prototype. The brand-newest Modern pilaster without capital or base was typical of Tel-el-Amarna, where Tut-ankh-Amen spent his boyhood, and where the architecture was in fact identical with to-day's block-shaped, roof-balconied houses. There were

the same square, wide window openings, though glassless, according to Mr. Seton Lloyd, of the Egypt Exploration Society. Flutes and reeding—also horizontal banding of the shaft—go back to ancient Rome. Even the step-back block forms find their prototypes in the Pyramids.

Mirrors, white, gold or black, engraved or painted, are far from new. The Chinese motif dominates much of the best Modern design—and the art of China is not new!

Even the outstandingly characteristic geometrical cubes, cones, prisms, pyramids, parallelopipeds and cylinders of which all furniture and lighting fixtures are constructed, or the decorations drawn in circles, rectangles or triangles—each and all as impersonally expressed and as bleakly set forth as upon the blackboard of a class-room—are not unlike the furniture of the circus ring and the decoration and pseudo-scientific equipment of the astrologer's tent of the side show.

All of which is why—except in the hands of those few who have invincible taste—the search for that which is new results in so much that is deformity. It can't be anything else!

Houses must have floors, ceilings, and walls. One can't walk on the ceiling or on the side-walls. There is nothing to do but put the floor on the bottom, the ceiling at the top, and stand the walls vertically between. Of course, builders can (and do) bend the walls in and out like screens, leaving hollow (waste) spaces which are punctured with shelves in various staggered, flight-of-stairs, or checker-board designs. They also sink or raise portions of the floor, and practise a hundred varieties of set-back slat work, or cut-through patterns, on the ceilings. There are many more possibilities for new expression in interior architecture than in furniture. New decorative material, for example, is to be found in steel girders and sheets of bent glass. There are also hundreds of strange rare—and most beautiful—woods with equally strange names, new metals, new kinds of composition stone, new textiles, new forms and surfaces of glass. But to attempt

structural novelty is very much the same as attempting to alter the human face and put the eyes beneath the mouth or the nose on the back of the head.

THE DISTORTIONISTS

In a second and quite a separate class, therefore, let us range the distortionists—those who, lacking the skill to create new beauty, or even to recognize it should they happen upon it by accident, simply deform beyond recognition whatever objects come to hand. It is these (unfortunately, they number the great majority) who give to Modern design its examples of illiterate and decadent vulgarity. Everything they make is overstuffed or underspindled, queer in shape—in short, freak.

THE EGO-MODERNISTS

These comprise the third and most diverting class, since they seek only to express themselves—nothing else in the world! If you are an Ego-Modernist, you simply interpret yourself—either as you are or as you would prefer to be. Moreover, you use whichever theme produced by whichever material in whichever combination strikes your personal fancy, and put them together by whichever type of craftsmanship appeals to you. You are equally free to choose an adaptation of the machine-shop, the barn-yard, the cemetery, the circus or the zoo.

In other words, if a spotted cow chewing her cud at the edge of a pond be the dominating thought in mind when you think of "home," you simply have your walls decorated in whichever way best interprets a sylvan scene. Perhaps you choose various layers of green and gray and brown hangings. Or perhaps you choose frescoes, or overlapped slices of green or silver wood, or glass, or metal. Perhaps you dig out a hollow in the concrete floor for an inset of water, lay down a deep-pile grass-green carpet, upholster hassocks, couches,

or camp stools with calico calf-skin, and set a thousand-watt sunburst in the blue-domed ceiling.

It is not easy to decide whether the Distortionists or the Ego-Modernists are those who have been impelled to play good fairy to the hippopotamus at the zoo, by building furniture just the right size for him to sit on, and embellishing everything possible with the bars that once formed his cage —plated over with chromium steel.

All this, I grant you, may be somewhat of an exaggeration, but it is much less so than you might believe. The pond was dug in a floor in Germany. The menagerie bars and furniture of hippopotamus size are everywhere, and ideas quite as grotesquely scenic are carried out with all enthusiasm.

WHERE MODERN FURNITURE FAILS

Considering Modern design solely as it applies to the home-loving sentiments of most of us, however, it does not fit in with the traditions that many of us are hampered by. One value of old furniture is that quite inevitably it imparts the quality of ancestry; one fault of the Modern interior is that quite as inevitably it flaunts the fact that it has none. In fact, so lacking is the effect of family descent that a thoroughbred cat or dog on the hearth of a Modern room is out of key. Cross a cheeta with a Manx cat and the kitten would belong on the Modern hearth. But *never* a blue-ribbon winner of registered pedigree.

Perhaps many of us care nothing for inherited traditions. Very well! And yet—without any, what are we? Nameless, familyless—born in the foundling asylum?

Furniture that is uncomfortable even to look at; an arm-chair that imprisons your arms at shoulder height, or one with a back six inches high; a writing-table with receding drawers, those next to the floor being a foot farther back than the top edge of the table; a knee-hole desk in which the hole is an inch or so lower than your knees; steel-framed furniture for which mechanical necessity, such as that of the

two extra seats in a motor car, is its sole excuse—these do not add the charm of comfort either in fact or in appearance.

As for the Modern pet sofa: Was there ever a greater snare devised than a box-couch of the '80s with loose book-ends or what-not stands for arms, and unattached cushions propped against the wall? The other day an athletic man of weight threw himself down upon one of these contraptions. The cushions, pushed by an uncontrolled elbow, slithered sideways against an end shelf, and with all the what-nots went crashing on the floor! Infinitely better the honesty of a wooden bench that makes no pretense to comfort than fake luxury amidst crashable crockery. And yet that a book-end sofa can be ideal is proved in Plate 28. The sofa—a real one—is set between shelves in a distinctly Modern manner that is ideally space-saving, comfortable, and practical. The room is not Modern except in the built-in book-case ends and the checker-board wall covering; but it is an excellent suggestion for Modern arrangement.

To many of us, "Home" is something more than an experimental laboratory or a parade-ground for the eccentricities of Fashion. One of the interesting problems, therefore, is to devise the adjustment of our personal possessions—those that are an integral part of ourselves—with whatever we are able to select that will harmonize with them. The selected things may be Modern, but first of all they must be comfortable and beautiful.

It is only fair to grant that the Modernists are improving. Any one who saw the Viennese decorations of a decade ago, or who saw the Paris Salon des Artistes Décorateurs in 1925, and again in 1929, is aware that the typically crowded and oversized restlessness of design at the earlier date—suggesting an insane copyist of William Morris who had just taken a dose of Paris green—has given way in many instances to walls of plain surface, or to restrained decoration that is distinctly pleasing. Moreover there are several uses which the modern style admirably serves.

Mrs. Stewart Walker, Decorator

A MODERN ROOM IN BLACK AND WHITE AND SILVER. (EVENING LIGHT)

[PLATE 62]

Mrs. Stewart Walker, Decorator

BRIDGE TABLE END OF BLACK, WHITE AND SILVER ROOM. (DAY LIGHT)

[PLATE 63]

THE POSSIBLE VALUE OF A MODERN ACCENT

Turning to another aspect of the Modern idea, let us ask: How practical is it? For whom, and for what, and for where? The answer, I think, is that its outstanding and unquestionable value at the moment is for advertising. Modern design—especially in its jazz manifestation—is the best possible advertising medium because it attracts attention. A show window, a display room, a new restaurant that makes no pretense to Modern interpretation has little chance to keep its prices at the top. The shop of unrivaled preeminence alone excepted, the very smart shop must be Modern; otherwise its offerings seem out of date.

Modern style also perhaps attaches a stamp of eligibility to the houses of younger persons whose eligibility is rather dependent upon their following the fashions of the moment. The value of Modern style is found somewhat paradoxically at the two extremes. It is a medium of amusement for the very rich, and it is equally a medium of practical value to the fairly poor. Its latter aspect will be explained at some length. But let us first consider it as a means of mere diversion:

If you are so very very rich that decorating an entire house is of such trifling importance that it may be discarded without a second thought should it prove a failure, or should you happen to grow tired of its success, nothing could be perhaps more tempting than to express your own creative fancy, or to commission whichever modernist you may choose, to express his own. Perhaps you might even send to London for Curtis Moffat or Basil Ionides, or to Paris for Ruhlmann or Jean Michael Frank. Frank's interiors come nearer than those of most of the other Moderns, to distinction. But the cost of a room by him is fantastic! You can figure it for yourself: Shagreen or parchment or split straw marquetry, or especially precious marbles, or some other equally valuable substance on the walls; ivory used in quantity; rare tropical woods, fancy slipper leathers, gold, chro-

mium, copper, glass, and fabrics of his own design. The occasional fault of his furnishings—a serious one—is unsuitability to utility. White leather and pale beige suède are not durable chair and sofa coverings—unless they go into hermetically sealed rooms that may be looked at through show windows but never entered. This objection, however, is easily overcome by selecting equally precious but less perishable surfaces. His rooms are worth noting because no Modern designer outranks him, and he never produces freaks. He achieves modernistic novelty by the use of low screens placed as though they were part of the framework at the ends of a conventional and comfortable sofa. His furniture is all comfortable and invitingly placed.

Other types of Modern rooms that have walls decorated with silver, inset with glass, or adorned with bas-reliefs, and that have furniture made of materials of fabulous value, are equally costly. A few are beautiful, many are not. As in every style, persons of taste select beauty; persons of no taste select the contrary. And perhaps possibilities of ugliness merely seem greater in the Modern style because our attention is focused upon it. As already noted, its two outstanding expressions are undoubtedly at the two extremes of fantastic cost and no cost at all. The whole middle stratum is just fat and shiny and vulgar—and moreover very expensive.

But the opportunities that the Modern style offers for the simplest type of house are very appealing to the imagination.

LET US SUPPOSE THAT WE BUILD

In short, it seems to me that the Modern style is even more adaptable than Cottage Colonial to the production of an inviting effect and of satisfying comfort at very moderate expense. So let us suppose that we are building a Modern house at reasonable cost from the ground up. Completely Modern house-building is of proportionately higher cost than furnishing, because it is out of key with frame con-

struction, but it can be built as cheaply as any concrete or stucco house.

Modern style in America has been confined thus far almost entirely to interior decoration and furnishing. But if we care to build a Modern house, it should not be hard to make it presentable if we design it with a simple façade of stucco, and with set-back stories at whose edges are balustrades or parapets instead of the inevitable rows of iron piping. On the street side it could be sufficiently conventional with windows of normal size and a very simple door—flat and square, or arched (not an igloo entrance!). Then either behind walls that continue the street façade, or only toward the garden at the back, we could build whatever window spaces might be necessary to the architectural interior.

The set-back upper floors that provide balconies on the roofs of the lower rooms are very attractive, but it must be noted that they add much to cost because foundations are more expensive to build than superstructure. Another disadvantage of every flat roof is that every room directly beneath it is unendurably hot in hot weather, and cold in cold.

Building the garage as part of the house is convenient and practical as thousands of American houses have proved. But building the whole house in the likeness of a public garage or gas station, as is the obvious intention of the Modern architects abroad, seems rather overdoing it.

The best features of the Modern style include light and air and space and frankness. Nothing is made to look like anything else; steel is steel, wood is wood, plaster is plaster, and windows—being intended to flood the rooms with sunlight—are literally unlimited in size. Sometimes they run in a continuous band the length of a wall and bend around a corner. Or perhaps they go from ceiling to floor—so that with the curtains pulled back the effect is of a wall of glass, and the ground outdoors becomes a continuation of the floor within.

The room walls are as often as not left absolutely blank and without other trim than a narrow band of quarter-round used as a baseboard. Or the walls and ceilings and doors and their frames are embellished in countless ways—in the old fashion, the new fashion, every fashion that permits the effect to be kept flat. Paintings or scenic papers that are in perspective do not belong in any modernistic theme.

Modern wall-papers are especially interesting. Some of them are very fragile in design and quiet in color, so that they look well over large spaces; a few are too strong, except to use as you would use a few widths or a panel of brocade. In this case the paper is cut off at a suitable point, and the rest of the space is painted. Such panels—really just flat spaces—are decorated as fragments, leaving other spaces beyond or in between, painted to match the ground of the decoration. (They are very irritating when broken into strips by use of different-colored grounds.) Gold or silver tea-papered walls that are then decorated with flat but colorful motifs, or with fragments cut out of wall-paper or shadow silhouettes—any of these very sparsely applied—are, to say the least, tempting.

When the walls are to be left plain, most beautiful and restful are the lovely indefinite colors of dawn gray, moonlight blue, mist-over-the-sea green, gray twilight purple—colors that are made by glazing two or three depths of grays and greens, blues and purples, one over the other—matching curtains are made by hanging two or three layers of chiffon one over the other. The result of this color over color can be wonderfully soft and quiet. The value of the quietness is lost, however, if there be restless furniture or floor covering.

BLACK, WHITE AND SILVER

At the moment, in New York, most of the best rooms are in black and white and silver, with ornaments of steel, black glass, white glass, and mirrors. This is the coloring of

the room illustrated in Plates 62 and 63. The walls are oyster gray, and the mural decorations are in silver.

The problem of this room was to make something of a space created by throwing two ground-floor rooms into one, which resulted in lack of architectural balance and proportion. The theory of the decoration was that it should be done very freely, like a sketch, always preserving the flatness of the wall, thus giving a certain height and sparkle and interest to a room in which the ceiling is too low. Characteristic of the Modern treatment, the irregularity of wall-space was emphasized rather than disguised, but the mathematical placing of the furniture was emphasized. Every chair stands precisely opposite or at right angles to every other. Even so, and although the room is used solely as a party room, to receive in before dinner, and to play cards in (the drawing-room and living-room being elsewhere), this room is especially chosen for the illustration of this chapter because it has a quality of restfulness and of distinction which most Modern rooms lack.

As already noted, the color is kept severely black, silver, and white, so that the people in the room shall give it color and find a becoming background for themselves. The consoles are of chromium steel, as are also the plants and flower-pots standing on them. The lamps on either side of the sofa are of mirror, and all the others are of porcelain or of glass and steel. The bridge chairs are upholstered in zebra skin and the sofa in civet. Two of the big chairs are of silver leather and the others are of black satin. The carpet is black velvet. The mantel, not shown in either of the pictures, is of mirror and black glass. The lambrequins over doors and windows are of mirror. The curtains are of oyster bound with silver.

Another monotone that is more popular in Paris than in New York is from dark brown to cream. (With this, copper or gold is best used with brilliant surface, but sparingly, and steel or silver more sparingly still.) But in the black-and-white key, silver and steel and mirror can scarcely be overdone.

Fig. 160
PALE PASTEL PINK, LACQUER RED, AND SILVER

MODERN USE OF COLOR AND LIGHT

A room that appeals to me personally, more than Modern rooms do usually, is one designed by Adelaide de Voo in pale apricot pink with touches of Chinese red, much silver, glass, steel and brown wood. It is indicated in Figure 160. The armchair shown, when pushed next to a reversed duplicate, makes a sofa. Together or apart these chairs have genuinely inviting charm.

In Paris, as well as in Germany, color is much used; sometimes frightfully—as in a favorite combination of terra-cotta, grass-green, yellow, and tan. But other combinations are interesting and a few beautiful. Very beautiful are the harmonies of gray-greens, smoke-browns, amethyst, and steel. Interesting and possibly suggestive is a high-ceilinged room with plain oyster-gray walls. The floor is of black and white marble lozenges. The curtains on either side of the wall-sized windows are of vermilion. One enormous chair is upholstered in brilliant blue velvet. Every other object is gray, silver or black.

Emil Fahrenkamp (Düsseldorf) especially uses single notes of vermilion and cobalt-blue, with silver, cream, and brown. Linoleum, by the way, when used merely as a base for a painted and varnished floor, has tempting possibilities.

Most of the Austrian and German rooms are very light in color and very simple in effect. An exception by Spaeth, in Nuremberg, has walls of elephant's-breath polished wood with a grain like moiré, black carpet, ebony furniture, blue-

white ceiling, and palest gray-blue upholstery and curtains, with silver-lined book-shelves.

At the Paris Expositions book-shelves have been an outstanding feature. Instead of having the shelves not more than an inch higher than the books to fit in them, and fitting these books in a solid mass, the French designers invariably line the inside of each shelf with especially beautiful wood or

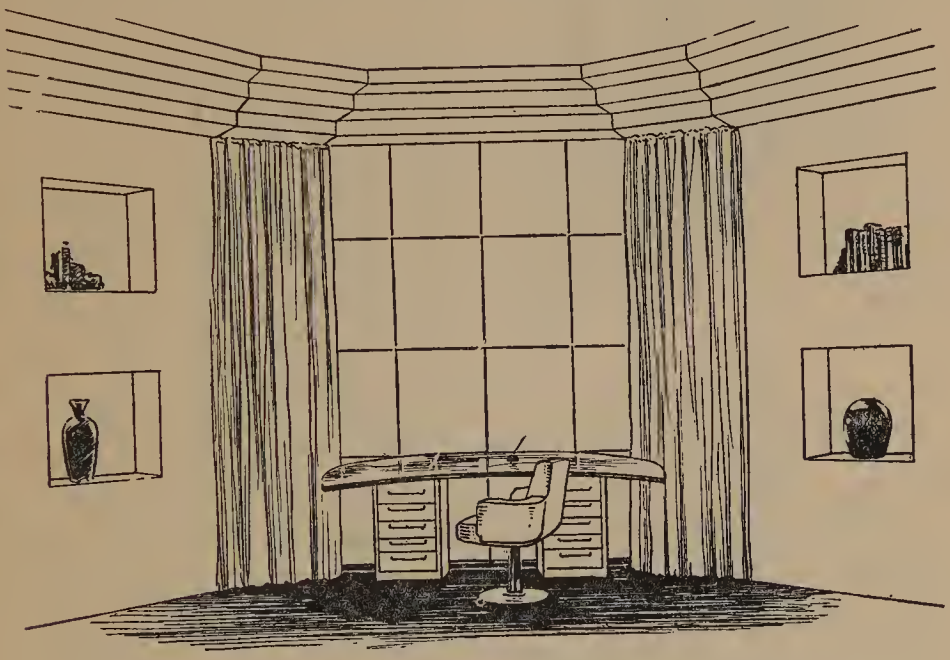


Fig. 161
TYPICAL BOOK RECESSES

silver or gold lacquer, and make it almost double the height of the books; and then they fill the shelves perhaps half full. Behind the books are very dim lights, just bright enough to accent the shelf lining.

The lighting of these same shelves or square niches used for ornaments would depend upon the becomingness to the ornament. Glass, porcelain, jade, and other translucent objects have lights set behind them. Others can easily be lighted from above by setting very small flashlight bulbs behind small recesses in the upper front corners. (See Fig. 161.) This drawing also shows an interesting and thoroughly com-

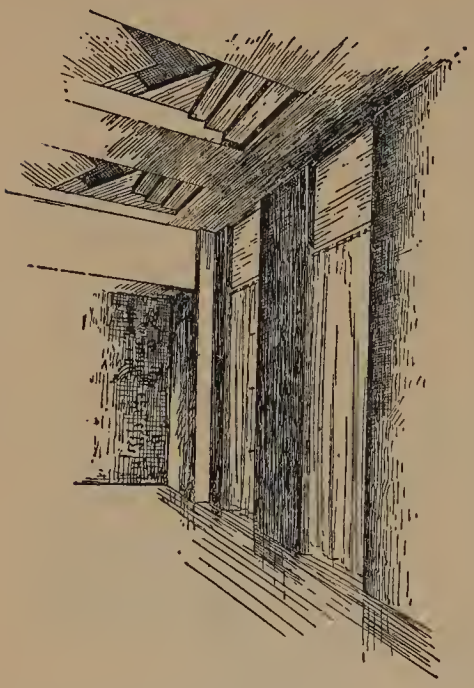


Fig. 162
BEAMS ACCENTUATED IN DECORATION

fortable desk by J. Ruhlmann that was exhibited at the 1929 Salon des Artistes Décorateurs in Paris.

Especially suitable to the modern use of books for producing decorative color effects is the idea, already suggested (page 439), of covering your own books with materials that accent the color scheme of your room. Any book-binding company will send you samples of cloth or leather for this purpose if you write for what you want. You can, moreover, have stamped labels made for books that are important—or importantly placed.

Other wall decorations include plaster bas-reliefs in the manner of Adam Brothers' use of Wedgwood plaques. The decoration is made in white plaster and applied to plaster which is colored. Personally I prefer white insets in white walls and sand insets in sand walls, but this is merely because the white on color is apt to look cheap. Design painted and slightly rubbed off—suggestive of a grown-dim stencil—is very satisfactory, whether of color or painted in silver.

TURNING HANDICAPS INTO ASSETS

One of the most practical decorative expressions of the Moderns is the use made of the steel beams which are eyesores to most of us, and to level which we sacrifice from one to four feet of room space. In a Modern room in a steel-framed apartment building, therefore, you need not worry a bit about odd juts and jogs, piers and crossbeams, since

they all fit in perfectly with Modern design. A decorator could do no better for you.

The sketch, Figure 162, is of a room exhibited by M. Guillemard at the 1929 Paris Salon des Artistes Décorateurs. It has an excellent suggestion for treatment of the spaces between steel ceiling-beams. Figure 163 was suggested by another interior at the same Salon, by Renée Kinsbourg. This shows an interesting door treatment, both in the door which opens into a screen, and in the very plain structural embellishment of the trim. There is also a suggestion for balancing a too-uneven wall by means of beams of step-back lengths applied as ornament. The objection is, of course, that they serve no structural purpose, though they might be made to do so by being fitted between the uprights and the cross-beams and made to brace the ceiling.

IDEAL FURNITURE FOR THE SLIM PURSE

The writing-table shown in Figure 164, designed for the Byrd Antarctic Expedition, offers unending suggestions for the personal as well as practical furnishing of the simplest house. A great objection to many of the very expensive examples of Modern furniture is that the rare materials, the ivory inlays and jeweler's workmanship, gloss over but do not really improve the old sewing-machine outline or the packing-crate designs.

Fig. 163
FOLDING DOOR THAT OPENS AS A SCREEN

But genuine packing-boxes and whatever lengths of wood of whatever sort may have accumulated in the woodshed, fastened together

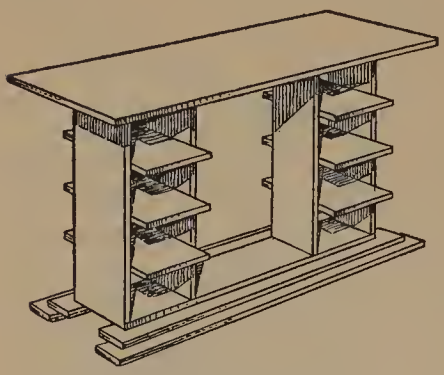


Fig. 164
DESK DESIGNED FOR COMMANDER BYRD

as ingenuity may find expedient, are as interesting as they are Modern. The tables, side-chairs, stands, bookcases of the Byrd Expedition should be comparatively easy to contrive out of almost anything. The wood must be smoothly planed and sandpapered and painted; decorated, perhaps, or perhaps finished in a solid color, or its various layers of different woods left natural, or painted in contrasting values. At all events, it must be shellacked and sandpapered and shellacked again, so that its lacquered or polished surface may be as fine as possible.

In the drawings below are several suggestions for the making or assembling of adequate furniture at moderate cost. The sofa (Fig. 165) is a box-spring, set upon whatever sort of frame is easiest to construct; and it has box-edged cushions over it. The book-end is screwed to the floor, so

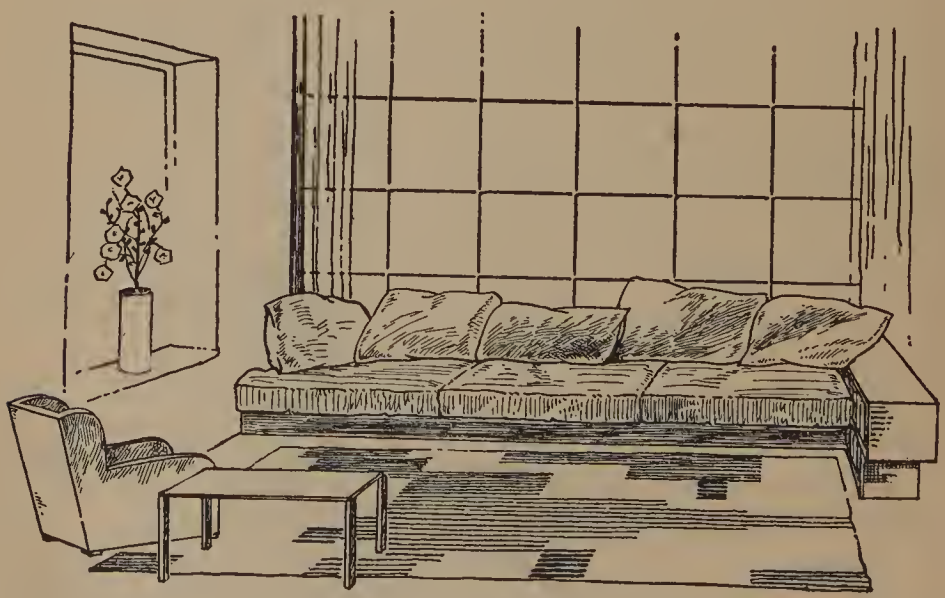


Fig. 165
THE APPEAL OF BRILLIANT SUNLIGHT

that it cannot slide away or be knocked over. The room is twice as wide as the window and the book-end of the sofa is also used to sit on facing either right or left.

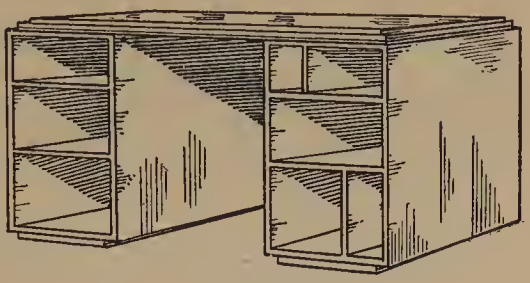


Fig. 166
MADE OF ODD PIECES OF WOOD

Another suggestion is the desk shown in Figure 166, which could be made by any one. Its modern effect is produced by set-back boards at top and bottom.

The expertly made desk, Figure 167, is the best piece of modern furniture that I happen to know of, despite its waste of space and its too small knee-hole—two faults which could easily be overcome by cutting the arch higher or making the desk larger and dovetailing other drawers at sides or back.

Remember that no matter which outline pleases your fancy, upholstered furniture must be comfortable. One tendency to guard against is the making of chairs that take up an inordinate amount of room, but are actually so small they are comfortable to none but fat dwarfs. This dwarf tendency of many designers is curious. We live in an age that exalts athletics, and we are rather typically a tall, long-legged race; yet all of us except midgets are put to the discomfort of attempting to sit at dining-room tables so low that only by stretching our feet out straight in front of us can we get our knees under the table's edge. Those of us who can sit flat on the floor with

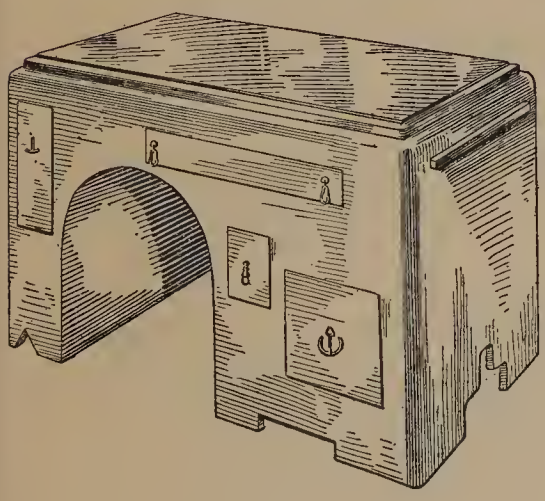


Fig. 167
LACQUER DESK BY PAUL FRANKL

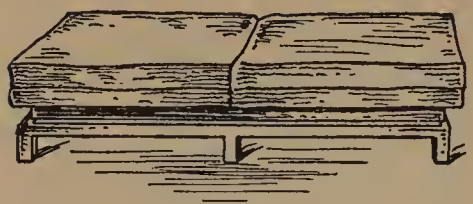


Fig. 168
A FIRE-STOOL OF CONSIDERABLE CHARM

knees unbent and without any back-support do not mind so much (I can do it for hours on end, so this is not a personal plaint); but those who like to bend their knees have no choice but to sit with them thrust against their chins, and sideways to the edge of the table.

The intention of all this over-low furniture is obviously to increase the effect of a room's size—which it does. But a chair very close to the ground should be rather deep and have a proportionately high and supporting back. Even if you are turning your barn into a Modern room, do not buy unnecessary chair-frame thickness. In other words, be sure that every eighth of an inch adds to the depth and resilience of springs and cushioning. If a chair is so completely restful that you can scarcely keep awake in it, there is an excuse for its overfatness; not otherwise.

Straight chairs and stools such as Figure 168 are among the things to contrive for yourself; otherwise it is better to use conventional ones. But avoid the pipe-legged and steel-strapped varieties if you would give becomingness to a room. Some of the steel-strapped glass tables are attractive, but steel and leather chairs are too suggestive of a dentist's office for appeal.

One great advantage of the Modern interior's intentional emptiness, is that those who are furnishing for the first time and have few or no possessions can feel that their home is quite complete with none but the bare essentials. If you, for instance, are a bride and are choosing the Modern style, you need not worry a bit because your bedrooms are without a stick of furniture other than beds and a painted starch box or two! (Provided you have plenty of closet space.) In a Modern house that is literally a palace the owner's bedroom has a gigantic bed in it, a rug, two miniature stands about six inches from the floor, and two glimmering lights

on them; two cube-shaped hassocks on which to sit, or to lay dressing-gowns, and not another object. Figure 169, for instance, has not an item of furniture except the bed and its accessories.

The essential furnishings of a dining-room comprise a table and some chairs, a rug, perhaps curtains or perhaps not. But for the living-room there must be chairs of ease—the fundamentals of comfort which perfectly serve the purpose for which they are intended. And remember always that things which are strikingly unusual, and therefore challenge attention, must have greater beauty than things which are primarily useful.

In nothing (so it seems to me) has Modern Art been so successful as in glass and steel and pottery, whether for the table or for ornament. Much of the glass is transcendently beautiful, and no word but "beguiling" describes many of the toy animals of chromium steel.

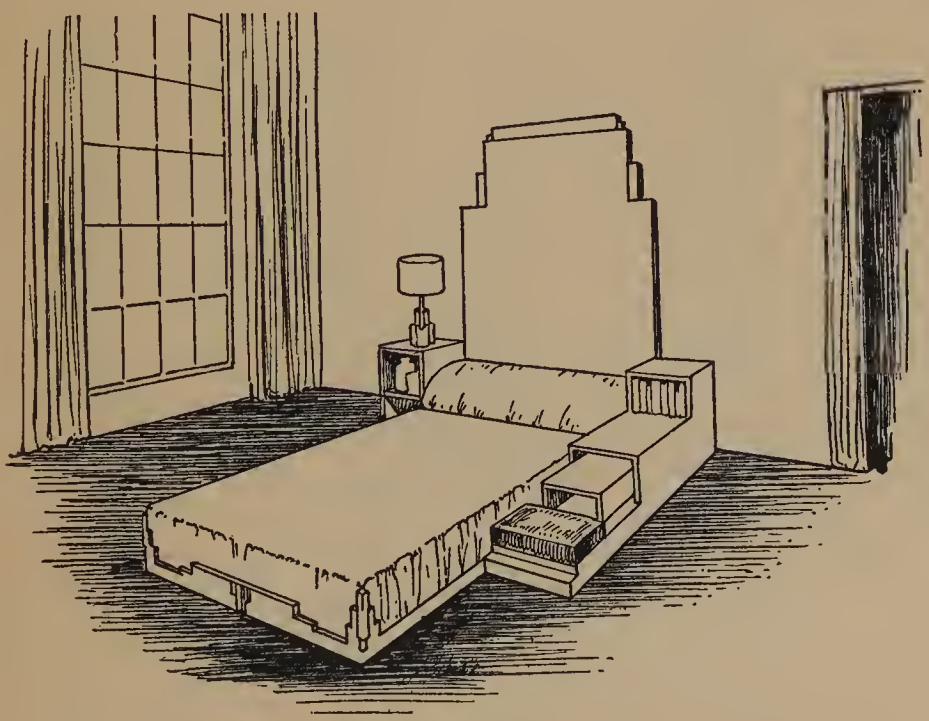


Fig. 169

BUILT-IN BED-TABLES AND SLIPPER-STOOL

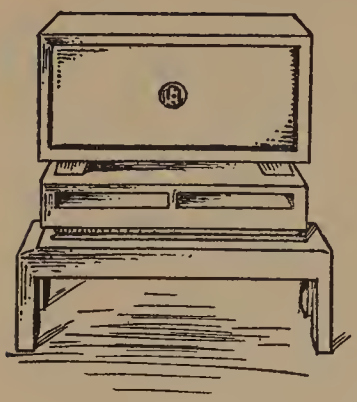


Fig. 170
OBVIOUSLY—AND BEAUTIFULLY—CHINESE

The outstanding disadvantage of the Modern decorative background is that it is often not in accord with the possessions of the majority of us. And to most of us certain of our possessions are an integral part of ourselves.

THE OLD WITH NEW ADJUSTMENT

An important point that might be made, however, is that many conventional objects go quite harmoniously in a Modern setting if adjustment be made with care and thought.

Practically everything that is Chinese or derived from the Chinese is in accord with typical Modern expression. With ease this can be made to include such furniture as, for instance, Chinese Chippendale. The lacquer cabinet shown in Figure 170 (really composed of three objects standing one upon the other), and the window-setting in Figure 171 are unmistakably Chinese. The French designers of best interiors are making special use of Directoire lines. In our own Southwest the rugs and pottery of the Navajo and Pueblo Indians are quite in harmony with walls of redwood or adobe, as well as with many of the Modernistic paintings.

A bedroom—or any other room—for a man is not difficult to accomplish, since plainness and severity are suitable enough. But a Modern bedroom for a woman—especially a young, beautiful and feminine woman—must be contrived with a light and skilful touch.

A dark heavy rounded-edge bed with surbase resting solidly upon a black carpeted platform, a heavy curtain hung back of it and a velvet cover drawn loosely up over its mattress and pillows, is all too often a catafalque; or in its most cheerful aspect, a bathtub stuffed with bedding. Put your bed on a dais if you like, though it is scarcely a

novelty in any house of size. If you must, box it in down to the floor (without a valance), then at least decorate it with color or do something to it, no matter what, to make it look unlike a coffin or a bathtub.

Solidly built-in furniture with not an inch of space between the solidly packed objects is a sensible arrangement in a room too small to furnish otherwise! But beautiful it is not. Innovation trunk-compartment effects in furniture, although suitable for staterooms on trains and ocean liners, are scarcely suggestive of the bedroom of a woman of charm and taste. A contradiction that no one has as yet explained, is that although Modern style may not be solely based on novelty, its ballyhoo is novelty. Novelty necessitates constant change. Built-in furniture admits of no change what-

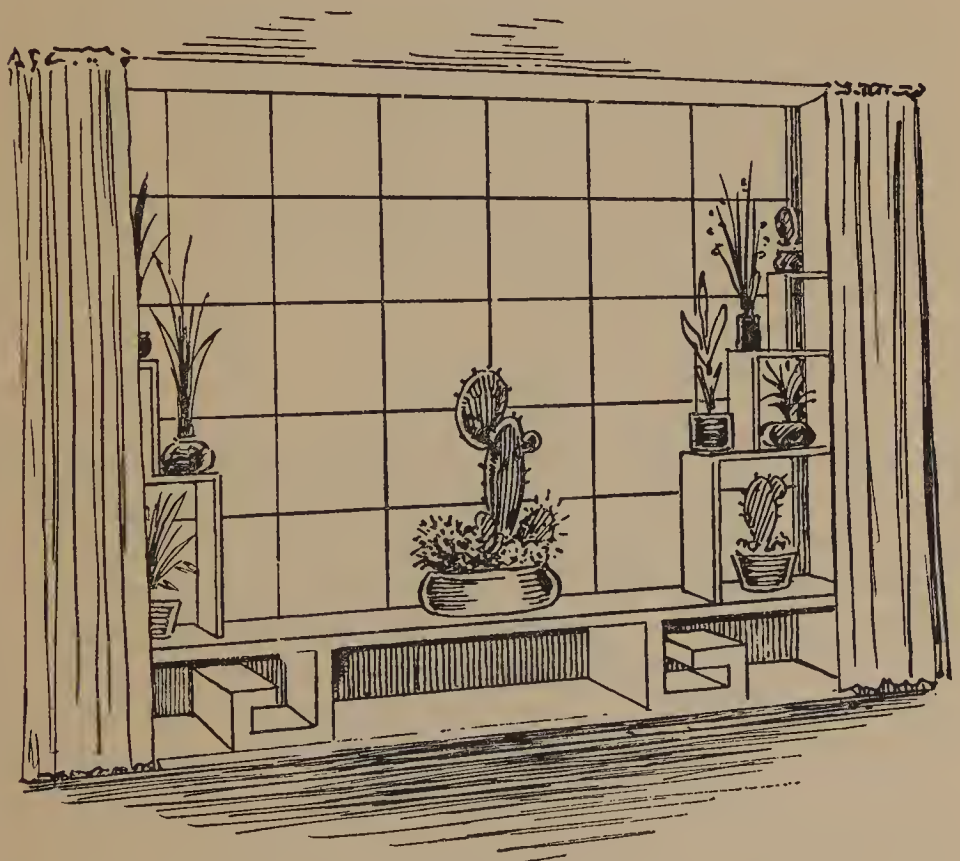


Fig. 171
DISTINCTLY CHINESE

ever! Perhaps the intention of the Modernists is novelty now, but never again?

In every type of room a dressing-table can be made of almost anything—a table of glass or wood with a mirror stood or hung above it. The Modern style despises petticoats; but you might have them, even so, by choosing strictly Modernistic materials. A quite marvelous dressing-table—at least one that greatly appealed to me—is made of a semicircular console table of wood and steel, with a mirror top, and set against a screen made of three leaves of steel-bound mirror.

BATHROOMS

In a few of the ultra-modern bathrooms the open plumbing, which for the last thirty years we have imagined to be an improvement on the old plumbing that was shut in, is now shut in again—not with match-boarding of wood, but with flutings or accordion-pleating of chromium steel or with colored marble. Bathrooms, being usually very small, lend themselves to rather extreme decoration, whether Modern or otherwise. (See Index.)

LIGHTING

Whether you find beauty in the dazzling glare of ground-glass boxes, cylinders, triangles, and groups of right-angled Peter Hewitt tubes, depends perhaps upon how kindly your eyes take to unshaded glare. In its dimmer phases of low-powered bulbs, a house equipped only with entrapped glow-worm effects is not very satisfactory—unless you want to sit and look at the lights, as you may sit and look at the moon. That would be quite different.

But discomfort in lighting, as a matter of fact, is the fault of the buyer who is led astray by novelty. There are innumerable lamps with shades—lovely ones, such as those shown in Plate 62. There are plenty of practical chromium

desk-lamps that can be stood on something high near a chair to read by.

It should be easy enough, for that matter, to think of innumerable devices that would obviate certain quite unnecessary discomforts which those who think only of novelty seem as yet unaware of. The achievement of comfort, convenience, and durability is merely a question of individual thought, ingenuity, and adjustment.

THE FINAL QUESTION IS: IS MODERN ART AN END OR A BEGINNING?

Between the milder revolutionists, to whom even Modernity's ugliest decadence appears exactly as the ass's head appeared to Titania, and the conservatives, to whom the entire Modern idea is without a single merit to bless itself with, lies the unsolved question: Is this a Midsummer Night's Dream, from which we shall awake to the realization of its deformity? Or is it the dawn of a great Period?

There is no doubt whatever about the ultimate survival of the fit, though what is fit and what is freakish can never be judged until we recognize the head of an ass, or of an Apollo, for what it is. At the moment, we are deep in new visions—or are they realities? In short, what value will remain when novelty grows stale? How much of the present expression of Modern decorative art will become permanent? Who can tell?

New art phases have become epidemic every so often. A few outstanding examples have been added to the ranks of the permanent Periods, but most have passed into the limbo of forgotten things. Within the memory of many now living, Pseudo-Gothic, Eastlake English, the black trim and furniture of the ebony eighties, followed by crewel work and cat-tails, American Mission, the drooping flower-stalk motive of Nouveau Art, have come and gone, leaving not a trace.

But manners and customs and points of view have so

radically changed in the last few years that some expression of this change is inevitable. And it would be both dull and absurd to say that from now on and forevermore, our houses must be everlastingly Tudor, Italian, French, Colonial, or so on. But this, at least, is certain: Whatever style we finally accept or evolve, must pass the fundamental requirements of beauty—exactly as food must pass the requirements of human digestibility. Sawdust is not food. Objects that are deformed, blatant, or inane are not beautiful.

Having throughout several thousand years accepted as permanent nothing less than beauty, it is not likely that we are beginning a permanent esthetic decline that will ultimately accept plaids and cubes and prisms on the walls, plaids and cubes and prisms under foot, a tiger skin flung across a sloppily made up bed, coffin sideboards, crypts built into the walls, furniture made in the image of vegetables with the legs of insects, or sausages skewered on bent lengths of gas pipe—simply because it has not been done before. Mere novelty created without sincerity of purpose and without consideration of the laws of design, has no more chance of survival than any other flimsy imitation that soon wears through to rusty wire, torn paper, and glue.

It makes not an atom of difference whether a style be that of the past, the present, or the unevolved future; neither does it matter in which of the five continents it had its inception. But fundamental principles have always mattered, and the chances are that they always will matter.

The principles of utility, suitability, form, line, scale, harmony, distinction, and sincerity of purpose, are immutable. Obviously, therefore, the more nearly a theme of decoration or an object of furnishing expresses these principles, the more likely is it to contribute permanently to the beauty, charm, and distinction—in short, to the personality —of a house.

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